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In the Track of the Storm



James H. Franklin

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IN THE TRACK OF THE STORM

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“ Our Village ”

IN THE TRACK OF THE STORM

*A Report of a Visit to France and Belgium, with Observations
Regarding the Needs and Possibilities of Religious Reconstruction
in the Regions Devastated by the World War*

By

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FOREWORD

IN the spring of 1919 I visited France and Belgium, at the request of the Board of Managers of the American Baptist Foreign Mission Society, to ascertain, if possible, what should be done to assist the evangelical churches of those countries in their reconstruction work after the great war. From France and Belgium I wrote several letters to the Board of Managers, which I am now requested to release for publication. Often these letters were written late at night, when the brain was feverish, or on crowded railway trains, which fact, I trust, will serve as a sufficient excuse for any apparently hurried composition.

Since these personal letters are to be published, it seems well to add portions of the more formal report of my visit to France and Belgium, and other related material. However, the small volume is intended as nothing more than a recital of a few personal observations and impressions. It is in no sense a handbook on any phase of reconstructive effort in the track of the storm.

JAMES H. FRANKLIN.

BOSTON, MASS.

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IN THE TRACK OF THE STORM

I

First Days in France

HOTEL CONTINENTAL, PARIS,
March 20, 1919.

I reached Paris just three days ago, having arrived at Havre on the seventeenth instant, after an uneventful voyage across the Atlantic on the French steamship *La Lorraine*.

Although actual hostilities have ceased and the completion of a treaty of peace is expected very soon, the hot breath of war is still felt over the land. One feels it in his face at any port of entry. On the dock at Havre, as our ship was being made fast, British soldiers passed whose smoked uniforms suggested the fires of battle, and whose tense faces seemed to express the strain of the conflict. An English hospital ship was starting across the Chan-

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nel on its usual errand. Another vessel, setting out for the Orient, had its lower decks crowded with Chinese coolies who had been laboring behind the lines and who clearly were rejoiced at being able to start homeward. Black men from French colonies in Africa were in evidence too. British troops were sailing home. American troops were returning from a "leave" spent in England.

I was met at the ship by Rev. R. Du Barry, the Baptist pastor at Nîmes, who accompanied me to Paris, where hotel accommodations had been reserved for me. Some of the passengers on La Lorraine without reservation drove in automobiles for three hours, after 1.00 a. m., trying to find rooms. One reported to me that he finally gave it up and found shelter for the night with the American Military Police. The congestion here at present causes the American Army to limit "leaves" for Paris to twelve thousand soldiers at a time, and for three days only. But to this number must be added the thousands of men in army departments with headquarters here, the hosts of workers in Y. M. C. A., Y. W. C. A., Red Cross, Salvation Army, Knights of Columbus, and other organizations—all in uniform. The hotels and principal thoroughfares are well colored with American khaki. The best-known hotels are filled largely with American army officers.

On our five-hour journey from Havre to Paris, M. Du Barry and I found a very striking mixture of

FIRST DAYS IN FRANCE

soldiers—English, French in their well-worn gray, Australians, Belgians, Americans, and I know not how many others—crowding the compartments and corridors of the very long train. It was my good fortune to have a seat in a compartment with five enlisted men and non-commissioned officers returning from a “leave” spent in England, who appeared to be glad for a chance to talk with some one just landed from America. If they enjoyed it, the satisfaction was mutual. For five hours our conversation ran swiftly from America to Château Thierry and the Argonne Forest; from good yarns and army gossip to morals, politics, and religion.

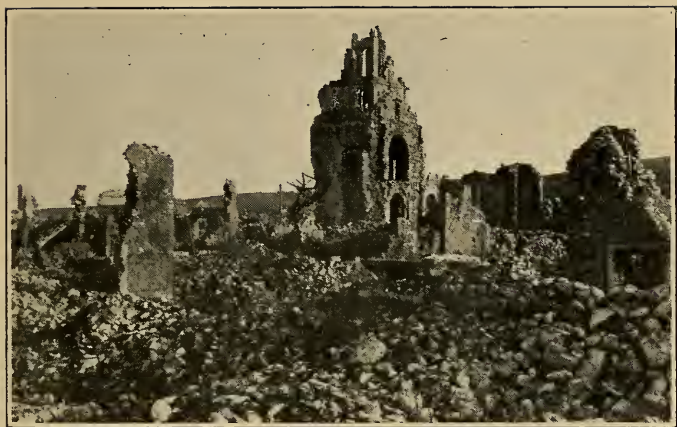
The train was so crowded we could not possibly find places in the dining-car, and without bread-tickets not even a sandwich could be procured at Rouen where we stopped a few moments. Kit-bags were opened, and we made our supper on hard bread and harder chocolate. It was a great experience for me, and all of us seemed sorry at parting. As M. Du Barry and I pushed our way through the crowd at St. Lazare Station in Paris, he remarked, “With the soldiers of no other army in the world would such a conversation have been possible.” That meant much from a man who has worn the French uniform.

The American army officers seemed to be in possession of Hotel Continental when we arrived late in the evening. But I was struck immediately with what I saw on the servants there. The ele-

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vator operator moved on a stiff leg, and when he turned to open the door I saw three decorations on his breast. Each of the two ushers in the reception-rooms showed an empty sleeve and at least two medals and ribbons. The porter at the door gave evidence that he had been cited twice for heroic action. In the Place de la Concorde, near my hotel, there is a forest of German cannon captured in battle. It is said here that when Premier Clemenceau was told that the children were climbing over the guns and the people were handling them, he replied: "Let them take them away if they like; we have plenty more." On every hand there is evidence of the great war.

My first morning in Paris was given to a conference with Rev. A. Blocher and Rev. R. Du Barry, representing the Franco-Swiss Association. In the afternoon we journeyed to Colombes, a large suburb of Paris, where Rev. E. Raynaud is pastor of the Baptist church, the only evangelical organization in that section. The second day I called at the office of the "Paris Missionary Society," as it is known by us, which is the foreign mission organization of the Reformed (Presbyterian) Church, the largest Protestant body in France. This is the society whose associate director, Chaplain Daniel Couve, addressed you on February 13. Before the war it had one hundred and seventy-five missionaries in Lessouto (Rhodesia), Senegal, Tahiti, Zambezi, New Caledonia, and Madagascar, and since the



The Silence of the Devastated Regions is Appalling



Captured German Guns on the Place de la Concorde, Paris

FIRST DAYS IN FRANCE

Germans were driven from the Cameroon country, West Africa, six missionaries have been sent to that section. But their losses have been so heavy that at present only one hundred and forty-three missionaries are under appointment. At the same time they are carrying a heavy debt incurred during the war. The French Government has usually insisted that missionary effort in its colonies be conducted solely by French societies. If the Cameroon country is made a French colony, a new obligation will rest on Christians in France to occupy the new territory. It is well known that German Baptists were doing a successful missionary work in the Cameroons before the war. When the English Baptist missionaries were expelled from that colony many of the native Christians proved to be staunch Baptists, which led to the development of larger interest on the part of Baptist churches in Germany. With the necessity for Christian bodies in America, England, and France to assume responsibility for fields hitherto occupied by Germans, and in view of the convictions of certain groups of native Christians in the Cameroons, it would appear that Baptists have a peculiar obligation to discharge. Unassisted, Baptists in France will be utterly unable to occupy that part of the missionary line in the Cameroons which may be regarded as a Baptist sector. Here is a field of activity in which the Baptists of France may require the practical cooperation of their brethren in America and England.

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Another conference on Wednesday was with Rev. André Monod, secretary of the Union Protestant Committee for War Relief in France and Belgium, with which our Board is asked to cooperate in assisting Protestant churches in the period of reconstruction. This committee is endeavoring to ascertain as nearly as possible the needs of the churches and the wisest methods of procedure. Upon the invitation of Mr. Monod I met later in the day a small group of well-known Protestant leaders. Another meeting was promised me upon my return from the devastated areas. Letters to government representatives were furnished me, requesting that I be given assistance in my plans for visiting various sections. A considerable body of data regarding the needs of the churches was at this time placed in my hands.

Today I have held a long informal conference with the following representatives of the Franco-Belge Association: Rev. Philemon Vincent, M. O. Beguelin, Rev. H. Andru, Rev. P. Pelce, M. R. Recher. The field of this Association lies largely in the areas made desolate by the German armies. Early in our conference there were warm expressions of gratitude at the relief furnished through our Society to needy people in their section. It was evident too that they welcomed a visitor from their American brethren. I shall go to practically all points in northern France and southern Belgium where there were Baptist churches, as well as to

FIRST DAYS IN FRANCE

other points where valuable information can be secured, if the Government will issue me the necessary permits, and transportation is available. The railroads cannot be restored to all the points for some time to come.

II

A Journey Into Devastated Areas

HOTEL CONTINENTAL, PARIS,
March 22, 1919.

At nine o'clock this evening I returned from a thirteen-hour motor trip (two hundred and ten miles), whose objective was Chauny and La Fère, in that large area in northern France made silent and desolate through the unspeakably terrible havoc of the German armies. At Chauny and La Fère there were Baptist churches with substantial houses of worship before the towns were laid in ruins.

I had not intended going into any of the devastated regions before seeing something of the Protestant work in southern France, but M. Recher, an engineer who is conducting the reconstruction of railways in a section of northern France, invited Pastor Philemon Vincent and me to be his guests today for a tour of that region in which he was reared. M. Recher is a member of the Baptist church at La Fère, serves on the Committee of the Franco-Belge Association, and represents his denomination on the Union Protestant Committee for War Relief.

A JOURNEY INTO DEVASTATED AREAS

Before eight o'clock this morning we were off in a light flurry of snow, which quickly disappeared, and soon we were being driven rapidly past the outer line of the defenses of Paris and northward over the great stone roadway along which Von Kluck marched with his army in early September, 1914, in confident expectation that he would see Paris fall in a few days. Quickly we were at Senlis, twenty-five miles north of the center of Paris, which was burned on September 2, 1914, the first town thus destroyed in the hope of terrorizing the metropolis itself. A few moments later we stopped in front of the ruins of the massive wall which the crown prince of Bavaria erected for the protection of his own precious body from the shells of the French. Near the roadway were the châteaux where German officers made their headquarters.

Our first stop of length was in the city of Compiègne to note the wreck of the home of Rev. H. Andru, pastor of the Baptist church at La Fère, one of the many results of air raids in that vicinity in 1918. The Reformed (Presbyterian) church building near-by was shattered. These, however, were almost forgotten two hours later when we reached the region of utter desolation. After the battle of the Marne, in September, 1914, when the enemy was only fourteen miles from Paris, Von Kluck was compelled to retreat to a line a few miles north of Compiègne. You will recall how for three and a

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half years neither side could advance very far, despite the desperate fighting. We were not long, therefore, in reaching what was for more than three years a sector of "no man's land," with its maze after maze of barbed-wire entanglements between the trenches, and the countless dugouts and shell-holes. Fields for miles on each side of the lines are still uncultivated, partly because men are not yet free for that work, and partly because so many unexploded shells are buried there that it is not safe to use the plow until an instrument with sensitive needle can be used to locate the danger-spots. From some fields many shells have already been dug, that lie piled along the roadside like cordwood.

Here too began to appear the little groups of white crosses, making for me the most solemn moments of the day. The lines that were known everywhere in America a year ago, kept coming into my mind:

We are the Dead. Short days ago
We lived, felt dawn, saw sunset glow,
Loved and were loved; and now we lie
In Flanders fields.

Take up our quarrel with the foe, . .
If ye break faith with us who die
We shall not sleep, etc.

With the exception of a few soldiers tramping along the road here and there, an occasional army truck, and once in a while a wagon loaded with the

A JOURNEY INTO DEVASTATED AREAS

furniture of some one trying to find the old home (if the walls were still standing), there were few signs of life anywhere in that area where cannon thundered, shells shrieked, and waves of men were cut down a few months ago. The stillness and absence of life at present are painful, and the blackened dead trees stand like ghosts, if they stand at all, after the destruction wrought by the Germans as they retreated in 1918.

We stopped next at Noyon, where John Calvin was born. Seven thousand people lived there before the war. Now not more than one thousand can find homes where the city lies in ruins. But people *will* come back, and some have found a corner in the ruins of their structures. With boards for doors and paper in the window-frames, and such furniture as they have secured elsewhere, they are starting life again. I saw perhaps six or eight places in the ruins where very humble efforts were being made to open shops. In one there were little packets of seeds on a rough table (not in lithographed bags, if you please, but in scraps of old newspapers), and women dressed in black were there to find some germs of life to plant in the desert, since the wild flowers here and there on a roadside remind them that spring is here. In the same shop was a basket of hens, with this card over it, "Poultry for reproduction." And about all that some of these women in black can hope for very soon is the shelter of a perpendicular wall, a chicken-

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coop, a few seeds to make a garden, a black shawl, and several fatherless children. When our hearts had been moved by it all, we recalled that we were looking for the birthplace of John Calvin, and M. Recher, who had known the place well, at last located the *spot* in the ruins. But visitors to Noyon in days to come will not find the house in which the great Reformer was born. Strange to say, even before the war there was not a Protestant living regularly in the city that gave John Calvin to the world.

A few German prisoners were picking away on the heaps of ashes and stones in the ruins of Noyon, and a French airplane was buzzing directly overhead, when M. Recher said we might as well go on, for we should see far worse destruction a little later. The destruction was more complete farther on but, strange to say, it seemed less painful. When the most of a city has been leveled to the ground and no person is in sight to claim a heap of stones as his own, and there are no jagged broken walls that rise like phantoms, with a few black-shawled women smiling—yes, smiling—at getting back home, somehow it is not quite so harrowing to one's soul, in the complete absence of signs of life.

By noon we were at Chauny, which was a lovely little city of twelve thousand people before the war. One section of the town was not destroyed. In the remaining three-fourths I saw not a single place in the entire area that could be occupied except the



The Village of Esnes, Back of Verdun



The Cathedral at Chauny

A JOURNEY INTO DEVASTATED AREAS

Baptist church, whose walls were left standing, and the military authorities have placed a roof on it for their own use. The house whose walls joined the church was completely demolished. I think I saw nothing in that area suggestive of furniture except a piece of the pulpit in front of the Baptist church. There was not even a picture-frame, nor a broken chair, nor a knife-blade. The Germans left complete destruction there and elsewhere. In themselves many of the spots would be almost as devoid of human interest to a visitor unacquainted with their story as are piles of sand in a desert. Even the wells were filled with stones if the water had not been poisoned instead.

In Chauny I stood in front of what was the Hotel de Ville (city hall), and next I stood inside of what once was a splendid cathedral. All was as still as death. No person was in sight, besides our party. I have not heard a bird chirp all day. It is spring-time too, and I have walked through forests and over the fields. Seriously, I wonder if the songsters have not been scared away for a time by the guns. I have been surprised all day at the silence almost everywhere north of Compiègne, and the absolute silence becomes oppressive to one in the midst of ghastly ruins, on roads bordered with deserted bomb-proof holes so deep that they are lost in shadows, or with woods bestrewn with shell caps, munitions, knapsacks, and occasional helmets that one is afraid to touch lest they be connected with

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hidden bombs. The silence is equally oppressive when one finds the rough tables around which the German soldiers sat in the woods, underneath trees that have been cut with shells, or bunks in the damp dugouts, or the long stretches of rusty barbed wire, or the shell-holes thirty feet in diameter and of equal depth—all so suggestive of the great tragedy.

Tergnier, a railway center on our road to La Fère, is literally razed to the ground. Great shops and factories and bridges are leveled to the earth, and protruding from the dust and stones are the twisted frames of iron and steel and broken machinery.

In the Baptist church at La Fère M. Recher first heard the evangelical message. When he entered the badly damaged building today he pointed to a spot and said, "There is where I used to sit." Again, "In that baptistery all the members of my family were baptized." We sought the "pleasant home" of one of his friends. The Germans had used it as a stable. Across the square from the wreck of the Baptist church building is the school where Napoleon Bonaparte received his military training. Chauny and La Fère are (or were) important little cities. Besides the Baptist there was no other evangelical church in either place, nor within forty miles of La Fère. No Baptists are left at Chauny, and only a few at La Fère under present conditions. But few people of any belief are left in any of the cities in this region.

Having reached the two towns in that region

A JOURNEY INTO DEVASTATED AREAS

where Baptist congregations were worshipping before the war in their own substantial and neat buildings, we veered a bit to the east on the return journey in order to pass through Amigny-Rouy, where M. Recher had made his home in boyhood. His family in Paris had asked him to see if he could identify the grandfather's grave near the church which is in ruins. A fallen fir tree, killed in the rain of shells, identified the spot for him. Then we found the ruins of the old home—"My mother's home," he said. He took from his cardcase a kodak picture made a few years ago, showing a beautiful brick cottage with vines on the walls and shrubs in the garden. In the ruins there was just one distinguishing feature that could be seen in the picture. Going to the fireplace in a wall that was not totally destroyed, he pointed to a corner of the hearth and said: "That was my place. I used to sit there when I was a boy. My room was up there." Finding a rusty, twisted iron frame, which was the nearest approach to any kind of furniture I saw remaining in any ruin today, he said, "That was my aunt's bed." Almost all the trees in the orchard seemed dead. The ground was full of shell-holes. Going into what was once a beautiful garden he found a wild plant in bloom, which he took up by the roots, saying, "A flower for my house." As we walked away I heard him murmur: "Finished! Finished! Finished!"

A peasant dressed in a soldier's old uniform

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came out of ruins on a hill in the village as we started to our automobile. During the seven months of German occupation of Amigny-Rouy he had subsisted chiefly on dandelions, chard, and turnips, with no potatoes, meat rarely, and only a little bread. He said many of the people would come back, "For they love the dust of their village." It is well they love the dust their feet have trod, for there is little left besides. Before we reached our car we found a shelter made by some French soldiers out of stones from the ruins and sheets of rusty iron. Over the doorway was this sign, "*Villa des Heureux*" (Cottage of the Happy Ones). One other man found us in that village. He too was dressed in a soldier's old uniform. For four years the Germans had kept him in Belgium. His wife had fled with the two children to Brittany when the Germans destroyed the town. After the armistice was signed the family was united and the husband had built a big board shack for a home. He told me with interest that he had been in America twice with Buffalo Bill, as chief of the French cavalry in the Wild West show. I remembered that we had left a big sandwich and a half-pound cake of chocolate in our lunch-box. As the boy unwrapped the sandwich he licked the paper for the crumbs that stuck to it before he began work on his half of the long crusty roll that was split and spread with cheese. The mother gave it all to the little ones.



Back Home Once More



A Ruined Section of Noyon, the Town in Which John Calvin
Was Born

A JOURNEY INTO DEVASTATED AREAS

Possibly what I have written you late at night, when my brain is feverish from all that I have seen and felt the last twenty-four hours, will seem inappropriate in a report on a visit to France to secure information regarding the condition of the churches, but it may be well for you to be given, as far as I can reproduce it, the atmosphere in which I am beginning to secure that information, and these are the conditions I found today (yesterday now) as I journeyed to Baptist church buildings. Nor is it exceptional. As we separated tonight Pastor Vincent said, "This state of things exists in two thousand cities, towns, and villages on a front seven hundred kilometers (about four hundred and fifty miles) in length." One feels like apologizing to the original Huns for giving their name to those who set the world afire in 1914. Tonight as I came up to my room and mentioned to an elevator operator, who wears an artificial arm as a result of the war, that I had spent the day in the ruined towns to the north, he expressed my feelings in his abbreviated English, "Impossible to believe without seeing."

III

A Great Protestant Meeting in Paris

Sunday, March 23, 1919.

After the scenes of yesterday it was pleasing to be in houses of worship in Paris today, and see all of them crowded with people. At 11 o'clock I attended service at the American Church, whose pastor, Rev. Chauncey W. Goodrich, D. D., kindly called at my hotel last week and offered to assist me in any possible way to secure the information I desire. The building, which will accommodate about five hundred people, was filled with Americans, most of whom were in khaki. Secretary Lansing and Ambassador Sharp were present.

I was peculiarly fortunate in reaching Paris in time to attend the great Protestant meeting held this afternoon in celebration of victory. The large hall known as the Trocadero was packed with enthusiastic people. Doubtless thousands of others would have been present had there been room for them. Since only five thousand could be seated, admission was by ticket. M. Du Barry and I were given excellent reserved seats in the same box, which made it possible for me to understand

A GREAT PROTESTANT MEETING IN PARIS

the spirit of the addresses in French. The Hon. Jules Siegfried, senior member of the Chamber of Deputies, presided and delivered an eloquent address in which he made much of the part played in the war by Protestants, calling especial attention to President Wilson and Lloyd George. I am told that the French people are much impressed with the virility of Protestantism as illustrated in America, and that there is a corresponding lack of appreciation of the course of the Vatican during the war. At the same time agents of the Vatican are said to be claiming large credit for the war, declaring that the best soldiers from England and America were Roman Catholics.

In the program at the Trocadero today there was large recognition of America. A noted actress, a Protestant, recited Victor Hugo's prophecy that some day America would join hands with France to save Europe, which was received with great applause, as were letters from President Wilson and Lloyd George. But the moment of most intense enthusiasm came when a pastor from rescued Alsace came forward for an address, accompanied by two girls dressed in the old Alsatian costume.

One could not attend the great meeting this afternoon without feeling that there is real strength in the Protestant movement here. Ambassador Sharp publicly pronounced it one of the finest occasions he has attended in France. Two of the hymns which were used were written by our own

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Doctor Saillens, who has been the best and most prolific hymn-writer in France. I have been told here that years ago the most prominent and popular Reformed church pastor in Paris wished Doctor Saillens to become his successor, where he could have preached to thousands instead of to hundreds as pastor of a Baptist church. He is a Baptist at large personal cost, although he gives his efforts chiefly now to the general evangelical movement.

In view of the large meeting of Protestants at the Trocadero at 2.30 o'clock, I questioned the wisdom of attempting a meeting at a later hour the same afternoon, at Avenue du Maine Baptist Church (Franco-Belge Association), but the room which accommodates two hundred and fifty or three hundred people was filled, and I have seldom had such a sympathetic hearing when speaking through an interpreter. Rev. Philemon Vincent, an able man, is pastor there. Members of Rue de Lille Baptist Church, the largest organization in the Franco-Swiss Association, were present in good numbers, their pastor among them.

IV

In the Old Huguenot Country and Across to Alsace

HOTEL CONTINENTAL, PARIS,
April 3, 1919.

I have just completed ten days of touring, which included the old Huguenot country in southern France, several points near the Swiss frontier, and a portion of Alsace. After my day in the desolate regions north of Paris, a change to sunny southern France was most welcome. The warmth of springtime was over the towns and fields that had escaped the havoc wrought elsewhere by the war. But the journey was tiresome, since it began with a full night in a second-class compartment with seven other people, and most of the next day was spent on a train which was run in several long sections in order to handle the soldiers, who crowd even the corridors and vestibules at times.

My first stop after leaving Paris was at Nîmes, where Rev. R. Du Barry is pastor of the Baptist church of sixty members, worshiping in a rented hall. Here too Rev. Ruben Saillens, D. D., has made his home with his wife and daughter every

winter for the last five years, going out to various points for series of meetings with the evangelical churches, which in that section are almost exclusively the Reformed. After seeing what doors are open to him there, I do not wonder at his fondness for labor much of the year in the Huguenot country.

Nîmes itself is an important city of over eighty thousand inhabitants, one-fourth of whom are Protestants. Here are to be found some of the best of all the Roman ruins. Nothing of like age in Rome is better preserved than the *Maison Carrée* (two thousand years old) in Nîmes, from which the *Madeleine* in Paris was designed. The gate of Agrippa, the baths, and the Coliseum are full of interest for the archeologist. And on the hill overlooking the city is the great stone tower which is said to have been erected a thousand years before the Romans came to that region. However, I had little time for archeology. After a late afternoon arrival and evening meeting, I was hurried away early next morning for a visit to the Huguenot country, whose proximity to Nîmes is responsible for the large Protestant community in that city. The hall in which I spoke there was packed with fully five hundred persons, who showed the utmost heartiness in their reception of the visitor. Probably not more than fifty in the audience were Baptists.

Colonel Goodfellow, in command of the detachment of United States soldiers at Nîmes, which is

THE HUGUENOT COUNTRY AND ALSACE

one of the numerous points in France where our men are permitted to go on leave, kindly placed an army automobile and his own chauffeur at our disposal for the journey to several points in the Huguenot country. The Desert, which is the name given to the hills and fastnesses where the early Protestants defended themselves against their persecutors, was our first objective. Just outside of Nîmes we passed the stone quarries where thousands of Protestants were accustomed to gather for worship at a single service, with some of their own number posted on the hills to warn them of the approach of the soldiers who might be sent at any hour to arrest them. At that time death was the penalty for the Protestant preacher, and imprisonment for his hearers. Under such conditions it was impossible for them to possess houses of worship. In those days the Roman Catholic bishops compelled every king of France at his coronation to swear to exterminate the Protestants. Yet the Protestants met in large congregations in the hills, with watchmen at observation points, or in small homes, or in caves. When one considers the great influence of the Huguenots on our own life it is strange that so few Americans find their way into The Desert. At several places the pastors said they could not recall other American visitors to their churches besides Secretary Macfarland, of the Federal Council of Churches, and myself. Doctor Saillens said he had never until now heard of an

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American Baptist going into The Desert. This unanticipated feature of my tour, which has been of such value in a study of Protestantism in France, was arranged for me by Doctor Saillens when he heard of my coming.

I was most fortunate in having Doctor Saillens as my host for the days in the Huguenot country. He is of Huguenot descent, was born and reared near The Desert, and is welcomed by large congregations wherever he is invited. We passed through several towns that day in which the largest halls are filled at the announcement that he will speak. For instance, at the village where we made our first stop on the automobile trip, there is a Reformed church building that will accommodate at least fifteen hundred people, and Doctor Saillens has it crowded whenever he can go there. Leaving that village, we proceeded to the beautiful home of a M. Hugues, of Huguenot descent, at the gateway to The Desert. Here the American flag was displayed at the doorway, and a very hearty welcome, including refreshments, was given to the visitors. M. Hugues is the directing force in the development of the Museum of The Desert, which is being established in the heart of the wilderness region in the old residence of Laporte, the Huguenot leader during the fierce persecution that was inflicted by Louis XIV more than two hundred years ago. In this extremely plain house, in a small hamlet in the hills, may be found numerous reminders of those

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“ who died for the defense of the gospel and liberty,” as tablets on the walls proclaim. M. Hugues had arranged for a group of people from the wilderness to come into the Museum and sing some of the old Huguenot hymns for us. As I looked at the band of simple folk gathered in the plain rooms containing reminders of their ancestors who suffered for freedom of conscience and to secure an open Bible, there came the words, “ Of whom the world was not worthy.” “ Resist ” was their motto, and many in that very region did resist even unto death. My heart was greatly moved by the thought of the sufferings of these early Protestants, whose fight for religious freedom has blessed the entire world. Nothing could have been of greater value to me in my study of Protestantism than this visit to the Museum, the large public meetings which I had the privilege of addressing at other places in that section, and conferences with numerous pastors.

Home after home was opened to us that day, if for nothing more than a few minutes of welcome, with a cup of coffee everywhere. In the late afternoon we reached St. Jean du Gard, a town of three thousand people, where Doctor Saillens was born, a mountain near-by still bearing the family name. Flags were displayed on the streets and a company of Boy Scouts greeted the visitors. The pastors of the Reformed Church gave us a beautiful dinner at the little hotel, the colors of France and

the United States being displayed freely. At the church fully twelve hundred people (Doctor Saillens estimated fifteen hundred) gave us a welcome that the American visitor can never forget. Flags of the two nations were in evidence again. How queer it seemed to be standing in a box far above the heads of the people, speaking down to them! But how easy it was to speak to such a responsive audience, even through an interpreter! It was nearly ten o'clock before the meeting was ended, but we must go to one more home for tea and cake before the automobile was permitted to leave the assembled crowd that cried: "*Vive l'Amérique! Vive l'Amérique!*" As our car passed along the narrow streets the people stood in the doorways to bid us a cordial farewell. In that town nine-tenths of the people are Protestants, and the record for sobriety and rectitude is truly remarkable. I was told that nearly every person in the audience that evening could claim a martyr somewhere in his line of ancestors. We saw the spot where some of them were put to death for being Protestants and preaching their convictions.

Midnight found us at Alais, a city of forty thousand people, one-fourth of whom are Protestants, where Doctor Saillens had arranged some time before to begin next day a series of meetings. Here too we had a reception that warmed the heart. At the evening service the great stone church was packed with at least twelve hundred people. They

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said I was the first American preacher to occupy their pulpit.

I was not foolish enough to suppose that the reception given me was in any sense personal. Partly it was because I had come from America at a good hour. At one place the girls sang a stanza of the "Star Spangled Banner," in English. But the reception was due principally to the fact that I was with Doctor Saillens, who as an evangelical preacher has such a great hold on the hearts of those people. I have seldom seen such a readiness to listen to a gospel message. I am inclined to feel that the descendants of the Huguenots may yet have a very special mission to France if only they are fired with a new zeal. At present many of them are very backward in their methods and are in great need of a revival within their churches. If they were aflame with zeal, and if Christian educational institutions were within their reach, France might feel again the force of the Huguenots. There is latent power in this group of possibly one hundred thousand Protestants in southern France. I would have remained longer in the old wilderness country, but appointments had been made for me in churches near the Swiss frontier for the approaching Sunday, and I was compelled to hurry away.

Sunday, March 30, found me at Montbéliard near the Swiss frontier, where Pastor Blocher, of the Rue de Lille Church in Paris, joined me as

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pilot and interpreter. The snows of the Alps seemed to fall on eastern France that day. The people could not remember such a storm in springtime. Before the hour for the church service arrived, telephone, telegraph, and electric-light wires were on the ground and no trains were running. In spite of the storm the Baptist church building was about half filled. Most of the ninety members live in the villages in the hills. But the visit with Pastor Jaccard and family would have been well worth while, even had there been no other opportunity to learn something regarding religious conditions in that part of France. An automobile succeeded in reaching Valentigny with us in time for an evening meeting that was well attended, although the storm made attendance difficult. Arrangements had been made for a popular gathering in a large auditorium, which Pastor Lucian Louys declared would have been crowded under different conditions. I mention these details that you may understand how friendly is the attitude of many toward evangelical movements. I was much touched at seeing Pastor Jaccard, wife, son, and daughter, of Montbéliard, who had walked five miles after the storm to attend the evening meeting at Valentigny, and started back home at ten o'clock. A Baptist family living on the Swiss frontier started in the early morning to walk to a point where a train usually can be found. Finding the trains held up by the storm, they trudged on for the ten miles. The father was

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an old man, and the son had spent four years as a prisoner of war in Germany. One of Pastor Louys' sons was walking on an artificial leg, the result of his response to his captain's call for volunteers to go out and bring in a wounded German soldier near the French line. The Romanists predominate in this section, but there are numerous Reformed churches, since the region once belonged to Switzerland, where the people imbibed Calvinistic ideas.

The roads on Monday were in such condition we could not carry out our program for going by automobile into southern Alsace, as guests of M. Wyss, a French Baptist layman, and of his son, in whose homes we had been entertained, and the trains were belated. It was nearing nine o'clock at night when we reached the little Baptist church at Mulhouse, a city of one hundred thousand, where the people were waiting for us, although we had disappointed them in the afternoon, and with the wires down we could not reach them with a telegram. It was interesting to find ourselves in what had been German territory before Alsace-Lorraine was restored to France. We were on German railway cars, manned by German officials, and people speaking German were all around us. The people, whose hearts as a rule were with France, had been compelled to use the German language, but when the troops of France occupied the city in November, 1918, a French flag was flying from almost every window. There is much of interest that

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might be said regarding the political attitude of the people of Alsace if there were time to write it. I received a decided impression that most of the Alsatians (not the German immigrants) prefer to be under the French flag.

All the towns we visited in Alsace had been German bases in the war. Twice the French took Mulhouse and twice the Germans retook it. Yet the town is practically uninjured. "Military necessity" did not seem to require the Germans to destroy a city which they claimed as their own, even though they were twice driven from it. Their treatment of a city they called their own was far different from that given towns in France under similar military conditions. I confess that when the lights were out at my hotel, and I recalled that I was sleeping in a bed often occupied by Boche officers whose armies had been responsible for the ghastly ruins I had seen in France, I was dangerously near a revival of my boyhood fear of spooks.

At Colmar, a city of fifty thousand, the Baptist church is really Anabaptist, and, accordingly, does not conform in its mode of baptism with the practice of many who seem to require the Anabaptists in order to prove Baptist succession. The pastor, four years in the German army as a hospital assistant, was away from home. He is a German by birth, but, on principle as an Anabaptist, opposes war. The wife received us most cordially in the simple home and would have us remain for a de-

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licious meal she prepared for us and for a few representatives of other churches whom she had invited to come in and talk with us. I have been entertained in a good many French homes whose hospitality was beautiful and where I had windows opened for me in many directions. Indeed, I have been living with the French these weeks. But nothing of the kind has touched me more deeply than the reception in this German Anabaptist home at Colmar.

It is interesting to know that Germany never won the Alsatians. For the most part, their hearts were with France in the war, and a good many of them escaped across the frontier in time to join the French army. Many other Alsatians were not trusted by Germany to fight the French, and they were sent to oppose Russia in the east. In northern Alsace the German immigration has been heavy since 1870, although it may be questioned whether the pure Alsatians even there were satisfied with their German connections. Strassburg (now called Strasbourg by the French, as Mülhausen is called Mulhouse), a fine city of two hundred and fifty thousand or three hundred thousand people, was a strongly fortified German base, and by reason of immigration from Germany the people there were quite sympathetic with the Kaiser.

Pastor P. Schild, of the Baptist church at Strasbourg with a membership of ninety-five (mostly Germans), had written Pastor Blocher, of Paris,

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expressing the opinion that on account of the political changes and the consequent exodus of many Germans in the near future (voluntary for some and possibly enforced for others) it might be better for the church to secure a French pastor. The most influential members of the church have been in the service of the German Government, and it is likely that they will return to their own country in the near future. The pastor himself is a German and was in the army for two years. Under such conditions we anticipated nothing more at Strasbourg than a brief call on the pastor to secure information. It was surprising, therefore, and almost embarrassing, to be told that a meeting of the church had been called for that evening in the small rented hall used as a place of worship, in order to receive us and hear us. Since we were on what is now French territory we could attend and address such a meeting without a violation of proprieties, although a treaty of peace has not yet been signed. But, seriously, I wondered what to say to the people who a few months ago had supported the Kaiser. None of the addresses I had made elsewhere in France, including southern Alsace, would fit here, for elsewhere I had been able to speak to my hearers as allies or sympathizers in the great war. The pastor opened the meeting with the statement that we were having a prophecy of the coming kingdom of God, in a meeting in which Christians found themselves ready to rise above their past political

differences. He said publicly that they knew that while he loved his own country he had never held violent political feelings. I shall not attempt to indicate how Pastor Blocher (who interpreted for me) and I handled the situation, except to say that we avoided the political issues after using the events of the last five years as evidence of the world's deep need of spiritual renewal. However, I did tell them of some of the devastation wrought by war in northern France. There was hearty approval when I said militarism had failed utterly, and there was agreement that nothing less than the spiritual renewal of man through all that is represented in Christ's cross will suffice. There were smiles all over the audience when I said that they did not look as if they wished to fight me again, and I surely did not wish to fight them; that we must find a better way.

I hope our visit to Strasbourg, which took such an unexpected turn, will do good. Pastor Blocher heard Herr Mascher, a brother of prominent Baptists in Germany, say to some one else that the visit proved that after all some one was interested in them. In all Alsace-Lorraine there are not more than two hundred and fifty or three hundred Baptists. There are said to be many Anabaptists.

Soon after leaving Strasbourg our train entered the territory where the line of battle on the eastern frontier of France remained practically stationary from the summer of 1914 until the armistice was

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signed. Many towns within range of the guns were reduced to ruins, although they were not so completely demolished as some I had seen north of Paris. For several miles the newly constructed railway was cutting through the wide rusty hedges of barbed-wire defenses that stretched, at short intervals, in long lines into the valleys and over the hills. It appeared that on this frontier each side was endeavoring chiefly to prevent the advance of the other, while using its forces at more critical points.

Passing near Rheims, I detoured in that direction for a few hours. It would be impossible for me to describe how the face of the earth has been mutilated for a good many miles southeast of that city. While we hear most regarding the great injury done the beautiful cathedral at Rheims, nearly the entire city also has been so swept by shell-fire that it will be difficult to repair many of the buildings. One hundred and ten thousand people lived there before the war. Comparatively few seem to live there now. In company with three American army officers I made a trip in an automobile to what was Fort La Pompelle, southeast of Rheims about seven miles, which the French held for nearly four years before losing it for a few months to the Germans. Today it is a mound of dust, with parts of the stone walls protruding. The top of the great hill was literally turned over and over again by the heavy explosions. The surrounding coun-



Not Even the Cemeteries Were Spared



In the City of Rheims. The Famous Cathedral in the Distance

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try too is cut into trenches and is bestrewn with unexploded shells and hand-grenades, between the dugouts and in the thickets of barbed wire. An occasional gas-mask or helmet or German overcoat may be seen, and graves of French and German soldiers. Several German tanks were left in the fields near-by.

This first departure from my itinerary of investigation of religious conditions was well worth while. The express-train on which I hurried back to Paris swept down the valley of the Marne, past Château Thierry, where I could not stop this time. The silent ruins of many a town on the hillsides are in striking contrast with the really exquisite beauty of the blue waters of the placid stream that is all but level with the green meadows. I had spent the night at a little hotel that was struck by a German shell in 1914, at Châlons-sur-Marne. An American soldier was helping me to find a lodging, and we were crossing a bridge when he remarked, "That's the river which ran red in 1914."

V

Religious Conditions in France. A Visit to the Bretons

ON RAILWAY TRAIN, IN FRANCE,
April 8, 1919.

Just now I am returning to Paris after a very interesting visit to the Province of Brittany. But, before giving you any of my observations during the short stay among the Bretons, I shall attempt a brief statement regarding the strength of various religious groups in France, although I recognize how difficult it is for a visitor to make an accurate deliverance on such a question.

While France is recognized as a Roman Catholic country, it may be questioned (if my information is correct) whether religion for most of the people here is not very largely a matter of tradition or inheritance rather than of personal experience. It is hard for Protestants of America to realize to what extent religion is a matter of inheritance in France and how many of the people classify themselves as Catholics or Protestants according to ancestry. It is especially hard for American Baptists, who insist so strongly on a personal experience, to com-

prehend the situation here. The attitude of the Government toward Protestants was so strongly antagonistic, century after century, that religious questions took on a political significance which is felt even today. Thus a Frenchman may not hesitate to declare himself Romanist or Protestant, and yet make no claim to personal interest in religious questions. Many in each of the two main divisions are said to be merely nominal Catholics or Protestants.

Before the war the population of France was estimated at thirty-eight millions. Of this number six hundred thousand or seven hundred thousand were Protestants, seventy thousand were Jews, and some (perhaps many) were avowedly agnostic. The rest were at least nominally Romanists, although it is said that only six or seven million of them show any real interest in their church. Many of the rest are "anticlerical." It is estimated that to at least thirty million in France religion is purely a formal matter, to which they give no serious personal consideration. This fact needs to be borne in mind.

Most French Protestants are members of the Reformed Church, which historically is the child of the Huguenot movement. Before the war the Lutherans numbered seventy-five thousand, the "Free churches" (so named when the Reformed as well as the Roman Catholic bodies received state support) one thousand five hundred; Baptists and

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Methodists about two thousand each; the Plymouth Brethren six thousand or more; and the Salvation Army a few. The McAll Mission is not an ecclesiastical body. The restoration of Alsace-Lorraine will change the figures somewhat. In Alsace there are about forty thousand Protestants, three-fourths of whom are Lutherans, and nearly all the rest are Reformed. There are six Baptist churches in Alsace-Lorraine, with a membership of about three hundred. In the same territory there are about one million five hundred thousand Roman Catholics. That part of Lorraine which has been recovered is said to be almost solidly Roman Catholic.

The Reformed Church, which is several times as large as all other Protestant bodies in France combined, and makes much of John Calvin and others in its ecclesiastical ancestry, is divided into two synods whose boundaries are theological and not at all geographical. Generally they are known as the "conservatives" and the "liberals." It is not uncommon for one group with a pastor of acceptable theological views to occupy the house of worship at the morning hour on Sunday, while a second group will meet there at a different hour with a pastor of their own preference leading them, and each group belonging to a different synod. Sometimes a single large parish (Nîmes, for instance) will have four or more pastors, some of whom are "liberal" and the others "conservative," caring for the work at the central building and in the several

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chapels that often are commodious houses of worship. In such cases a schedule of services is announced in advance, a pastor preaching at the central building or a chapel for a Sunday and then at other chapels in turn until he has made the rounds, much as he would do if he were the only pastor for several groups of people. Three of the five pastors at Nimes belong to one synod and two to the other. And these are ecclesiastical descendants of John Calvin and the Huguenots! The situation makes more iridescent the dream of the advocates of organic church union.

In the days when the state supported religion the Reformed Church as well as the Roman Catholic was recognized. This fact, coupled with the noble history of the Reformed Church, may have given that large group a consciousness of being the Protestant body of France, and other evangelicals appear to have been regarded at times with some disfavor. With some of its number possibly this feeling still abides, but with many my reception as a Baptist was as cordial as it could have been in any church in America.

When state support was discontinued the Reformed Church agreed on a scale of salaries for its pastors, the cost of living in various communities being considered, and now each congregation makes weekly contributions to the central fund of its synod for distribution according to the approved scale. Thus the strong parish helps the weak field. In

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their foreign mission work and in many other activities the two synods of the Reformed Church are in active cooperation.

As to the effect of the war on the Roman Catholic work in France it is hard to speak with confidence. A visitor is compelled to secure his information from those with whom the wish is likely to be the father of the thought. The prestige of the Vatican as represented in the present pope appears to have suffered in the minds of very many thoughtful people in France, but the attitude of one pope is not in itself sufficient to disturb permanently the grip of Rome. The thought processes of the masses, when they think at all for themselves, are usually the product of the fervor and devotion of many generations, and the effect is so apparent in almost every phase of life here that a single convulsion, even one as titanic as the great war, will not change it instantly. It may be questioned whether either Protestant or Catholic in France can use the war as a telling argument against the other. If the attitude of the Vatican should be thrown into the face of Romanists here, the immediate responsibility for the war may promptly be laid at the door of a nation whose religion is professedly Protestant. A foe who destroyed so many of their cathedrals will hardly be considered by the masses as in any kind of alliance with Rome.

The judgment of a visitor to France is very likely to be superficial on the deeper things in the

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life of the people, and therefore I express my opinion with hesitancy, but I am inclined to believe that any approach to France today with attempt to make capital out of the attitude of the Vatican in the war would react. The Romanists, like others, prefer to note for themselves the failures in their own household, and the effect of any tirade against their religion might intensify them in their defense. Without question, there is dissatisfaction on the part of many in France at what they find in the dominant Church, and they desire greater reality in the expression of religion, as is true in America as well. If evangelical Christians can furnish the spiritual food that is desired at this hour in France as well as elsewhere, they have a great mission; but for these times wisdom more than human is required. In my judgment, no bold attempt from the outside to inundate France will succeed, although I think I see certain native springs whose flow could be accelerated.

There can be little doubt that Protestantism has a new prestige since the war, but at present the masses are not seeking anything new. However, there does appear to be an atmospheric condition which if not positively favorable is less unfriendly to evangelicals. If a spiritual contribution can be made to France now by evangelicals of other lands, without display and with evidently disinterested motive, there exists an opportunity to render a real service. Just the form which the service should

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take is another matter, and here is where much wisdom will be required. And while Protestantism may be regarded with greater respect, it may be questioned whether there is any deeper interest in organizations.

These questions are too large for adequate discussion here. An American officer who sat at lunch with me on the train today, knowing nothing whatever of me or my mission, spoke at length of the effect of the war on his religious thinking, and of his conclusion not to unite with any church although he had once intended doing so. After our conversation had revealed my own attitude and I repeated what I had heard of the personal feeling of soldiers on the day of the armistice, he quickly replied, "Oh, every man who has been to the front believes in God." From what I am hearing I am inclined to believe that the general effect of the war on the religious thought of France is not far from the effect in America, allowance being made for the varying ecclesiastical conditions. I wish it were possible for me to give you many of the interesting details of interviews, but I find little time for writing except late at night or on railway journeys.

The reason for my visit to Brittany was the urgent request of Pastor Blocher that I go with him to meet several representatives of small unorganized Baptist groups and a few Quakers, who are about all the evangelicals in the land of the old

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Druids, which was described to me as the darkest part of France in some respects. The attitude of the Romanists there in other years was one of intense opposition to everything bearing a Protestant name. English Baptists have furnished the chief support for evangelical effort in Brittany, either through their own Missionary Society, or through an independent committee. In view of the Welsh immigration to Brittany long ago, the British people may appropriately consider this their field for assistance to the evangelical forces. Therefore I need not go into details regarding the situation in Brittany, a country with a quaint appearance and with quainter people. The stone houses, with mold on the walls and on the roofs of tile or thatch, suggest Scotland. The thick earthen embankments, six feet or more in height, that serve as fences, suggest the dikes of Holland. The Bretons who populate that part of Brittany which I visited, with their heavy wooden shoes and the flaring white head-dress of the women, make one think again of the Netherlands.

Thus far little effort has been made by French Baptists in Brittany to organize churches. They seem to think that a leavening process is necessary and that their first duty is to serve the people in such a spirit as to break down opposition. It is evident that the life and labors of the present generation of workers, nearly all of whom are French by birth, have done much to overcome the hatred of

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Romanists in the two sections in which they labor. One center, at Morlaix, is in charge of a Mr. Jenkins, born in France, the son of English parents who were sent to Brittany by the Baptist Missionary Society of England about seventy-five years ago for work among the Bretons. Mr. Jenkins is more French than English in both language and thought. Another center of evangelical effort is Tremel, which was really the first station opened by the English Baptist missionaries. Two of the early converts in the work of Mr. and Mrs. Jenkins, Sr., were M. and Mme. Le Coat, who became strong leaders. Soon the English missionaries decided to leave Tremel to the French converts.

Pasteur Le Coat planned a mission of extraordinary scope. The compound on a hill where trees and evergreens were planted with a view to good effect, with a small trout stream in the meadows at the rear, holds eight or ten stone structures whose various uses before the war prove the vision of the designer. First of all is the chapel, into which possibly two hundred people might be crowded. Then there are school buildings—one for boys and another for girls; a “hospice” where sick people could find a bed in which to rest and old poor people a place to die, while something might be done for their comfort; an orphanage, a dispensary, and several residences. Near the gate, on the public highway, is a “tramp house,” where moneyless travelers might find shelter. Close at hand was a flax-mill

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that furnished employment and gave training as well. In a shed are several conveyances—one of them a gospel wagon—that were used in the evangelistic and industrial work. At outposts are several good buildings that were used as preaching-places. Most of this equipment has been unused since 1914. With the outbreak of the war some of the staff joined the colors. All were French by birth except one, a Welshman who came to France when a boy and is therefore French in his attitude and accent. In the early days of the war Pasteur and Mme. Le Coat died, and with the death also of the leader of the independent committee in England the financial support of the mission was suddenly lessened, while wartime prices continued to prevail. The number of orphans being educated at the mission was cut in half, shops were closed, wagons were placed under shelter, and the school for boys was discontinued. The Welshman and his wife, self-supporting, and the two Le Quere sisters and another woman are holding the situation. Each of the Le Quere sisters, converts of the mission, continues there at a salary of six hundred francs per annum (\$120) besides her own living.

The Tremel mission appealed to me as an opportunity to render useful service if the work were well directed. Like most other independent missionary movements, the mission finds itself stranded. But there can be no question that it has made a favorable impression and has gained the confidence

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of a community in what was described to me as "the darkest part of France." Despite the hold of Roman Catholicism on the people, they do not hesitate to go to the chapel at the mission when they are interested in what is being done there. Perhaps the priests would discourage or forbid their attendance if the place were called a church. It may be the Baptists there have been wise in not attempting to organize churches. They are interested now chiefly in reaching the people with the gospel message. The evening I spoke in the chapel about one hundred and fifty Bretons in their heavy wooden shoes thundered down the stone aisles. The white wings on the heads of the women made a queer picture in the dim light. They preferred that my address be interpreted into Breton rather than French. In a single week I had been interpreted into three tongues, and all in France. At the conclusion of my address the children of the orphanage sang the "Star Spangled Banner" in French. A little later a group of the villagers, returning home in the moonlight, were heard singing as they joined in the old-time Breton dance, shuffling their heavy wooden clogs over the stones.

I do not know any other place where ignorant peasant people in a community so strongly Roman Catholic would go in such numbers to hear a Protestant. Romanism is rooted there far into the distant past. It has entwined its roots around and appropriated the institutions to which they found

the people wedded. For instance, the sarcophagus on the grounds of the mission which was an altar for human sacrifice by the Druid priests (How far back in the Dark Ages?) is now called by the Romish priests the bed of St. Peter.

(NOTE. Upon reaching London, Secretary Franklin was pleased at discovering the intention of English Baptists to enlarge their efforts in Brittany, which is properly their field, if satisfactory arrangements can be made for the conduct of the work.)

VI

To Brussels and Liège

ON RAILWAY TRAIN, IN BELGIUM,
April 12, 1919.

I am returning now from a visit to two of the four Baptist churches in Belgium, having stopped in Brussels and Liège long enough to receive some impression of the work done in the two places by struggling bands of people. In all Belgium there are about one hundred and fifty members of the four Baptist churches. Perhaps the most surprising bit of information some of them received from me was my statement that in America there are six or seven million Baptists. Both groups seemed pleased at having an American visitor of their own faith.

My train was late in reaching Brussels, but the people, not more than twenty-five in all, were waiting for me when, at 9.30 in the evening, I entered the small but strikingly bright, clean, and attractive little room which will accommodate possibly seventy-five at one time. The hall is on a good street, is directly opposite one of the large public buildings of the city, and displays two open Bibles

in the front windows. The open Bible seems to be a badge of Protestantism in several sections of Europe. The general appearance of the place, with several rather choice pictures on the walls, suggests that some one with a sense of the fitness of things, even for a mission hall, has control. That person is a Mr. Hoffman, a Swiss Baptist who married an English woman and has been in business in Brussels for many years. A few friends in England have assisted him to meet the expense involved, which has amounted to about fifteen hundred francs per annum for the hall. Inasmuch as he conducts the services, there is not much more expense. The organization, whose name being translated means "Evangelical Church Known as Baptist," has no connection with any association or other denominational body. Its membership since the war numbers only twenty-three, but Mr. Hoffman says that during the years of work in a very simple way as many as one hundred have been baptized there, and many others have accepted the evangelical message, although they did not break formally with the Church of Rome.

I do not know of a land where the alliance between Church and State is closer than in Belgium. Here not only the Roman Catholics, who constitute, in name at any rate, almost the entire population, receive support for churches and schools from the state, but the same kind of aid is given to the Reformed Church and other Protestants if requested

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by a congregation of required size. Recently a group which was described to me as "The Free Church of Scotland" applied for and received aid from the Government. Jews too are recognized in the distribution if they meet the requirements as to numbers. No Baptist church, however, contemplates assistance even though its growth were to entitle it to a subsidy. But the entire Protestant constituency is small.

The second church which I visited in Belgium was the one at Ougrée, a suburb of Liège, with a population of sixteen thousand. Liège proper is a city of one hundred and seventy thousand people, and I was told that within a radius of about three miles there is a population of possibly four hundred thousand. The region is rich in coal, and Ougrée is largely a mining-town. The Baptist church there owns its "temple," as the Protestant house of worship is often called in France and Belgium, which is a neat brick structure seating about one hundred and fifty people. The resident membership numbers forty-three since the war. Pastor Brogniez reports that in his twenty-five years in Ougrée he has baptized about two hundred and fifty converts, which is a good record for an evangelical church in Belgium. I judge that most of the earnest souls constituting the little church are plain and poor, as seems to be true at Brussels. Nearly all of them in both places suffered much during the period of German occupation.

TO BRUSSELS AND LIÈGE

The first battle of the great war was fought near Liège, when Belgium with forty thousand troops, opposed one hundred and fifty thousand Germans, and retreated only after thirteen days of resistance. It is reported that the enemy's casualty list numbered forty-two thousand. The first engagement occurred only a short distance from Ougrée, and Pastor Brogniez and men in his congregation assisted in burying the dead. The young man who interpreted for me at Ougrée, a Belgian soldier, participated in the first battle of the war, when he was made prisoner. After two years in Germany he escaped into Switzerland and very soon thereafter was with the Belgian army again. His father, a non-combatant, was shot by the Germans in 1914, but none of the family ever knew why.

Seventy-five people came out to meet me and to hear my words at the meeting in the temple, although the pastor had not been given long notice to arrange for a gathering at an odd hour in mid-week. One could hardly fail to experience unusual emotions in conveying greetings to such a people, in such a place. The illustration of David with his sling and stones going out to meet Goliath in his armor seemed to appeal to them, and they appeared heartened at the announcement of the world's admiration for a small nation that has become great through its stand against an enemy incomparably stronger than itself. Poor souls! Their suffering has been so intense that the masses in Belgium do

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not realize, I suspect, what their heroism saved for the world by holding back the Germans long enough for France and England to mobilize a part of their forces. Hunger gnawed at their vitals so sharply they could not think much about the larger meaning, for the world, of all their sufferings.

Any one who spends a few days in large devastated areas of France and then goes to Belgium is likely to form an erroneous idea of the latter's suffering if he has no way of getting next to the plain people. Belgium's fields are green and most of her cities are standing, except in a small western section, although many towns are injured, and just before the armistice factories and mines were damaged to the limit of German ingenuity. Belgium's suffering does not seem to the tourist as great as that of France. It was suffering of intense nature, however. In the homes where I was received stories were told me, in response to my questions, that all but made me feel I was doing wrong in eating much of the good food set before me, when the privations at those very tables until recently had been acute. At Ougrée I asked two persons what the people lived on in those days of German occupation, when there was little food besides the half-pound of soggy brown stuff called bread (no one could tell me of just what it was made) that the Germans issued daily to each civilian. The reply in each case was "Rutabagas." Later I was told that sugar-beets were another

staple food in those days. It was particularly hard on persons with delicate stomachs who could not digest the thing called bread. The wife of the pastor told me that some of the people in the community cried with hunger while lying in their beds at night. The pastor told me of an old man returning him most profuse thanks for four potatoes. He was in ecstasy at the prospect of such a feast. And as if it were not enough to make the children and the sick and the aged cry in the night, the Germans took the woolen mattresses from Belgium and sent them to Germany to make uniforms for men who were killing Belgian boys. Mr. Hoffman told me of a poor old man in Brussels who said to him: "When I was hungry I could at least stay in bed and keep warm. Now they have taken my bed." These people were told to stuff bags with cut paper and sleep on them. The homes in all of Belgium that was under German control (and that was practically all of Belgium) were searched for articles of military value. Door-knobs were removed, fixtures of brass, copper, and nickel were taken, as were cooking utensils made of those metals. It didn't matter so greatly about the cooking utensils, for the poor people had precious little to cook, but it did tear their hearts to think that their possessions were to be converted into shells with which to kill their own boys. All copper and nickel and silver coins were taken up and zinc and paper money was substituted. Certain taxes must

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be paid in gold, although the amount might be small, and the change was given in paper.

When I started for my room Thursday night Mrs. Hoffman remarked that I would find it rather bare. She explained the lack of curtains, saying that when she heard the Germans were about to take heavy goods of that sort to make clothing for the troops, she had them cut up and made into garments for the poor Belgians before the order was actually issued. She was on the point of having her carpets made into slippers for the same people, getting ahead of the Germans again, when the armistice was signed. Knowing that the Germans were about to requisition the dogs, she had her own pet chloroformed. If subjects of Switzerland, a neutral country, were subjected to such treatment, the lot of the Belgians must have been severe indeed.

In the worst days, food prices, for those who could buy, were fabulous. Some of the prices were approximately as follows: butter \$4 per lb., sugar \$1.25, beef \$4, potatoes 40 or 45 cents, beans \$1.20, wheat, to be ground in coffee-mills, \$1.20. Note that these prices are given in dollars for English pounds, not in francs for kilos. The Germans were supposed to issue small rations of these articles at a fixed price, but for months at a time they were not issued at all. It furnished me a grain of comfort to know that a little of the money sent from Boston for relief work during the war reached Mr.

Hoffman by way of Switzerland, who used it for the benefit of some of the people in the audiences I met. Had we only known the real conditions, we would have called on our people to do far more.

The occupied area of France was treated much as Belgium was treated. The able-bodied men and even boys were sent to labor in Germany or to work in the trenches from which the Germans fired upon the Belgians. Belgium's suffering as a whole was different from that whose marks one sees in northern France, but it must have been fully as severe, for added to the rest was the habit of the Germans to report exaggerated stories of their own victories and the defeat of the Allies.

This report has been dashed off on a moving train. It is given largely to matters you may not have expected me to bring to your attention, and your acquaintance with conditions here may make unnecessary the recital of such details, but I hope it will help you to a somewhat clearer understanding of conditions where the suffering has been so acute.

On my way north from Paris, through Albert and Arras to Lille, along the line where the Germans fought so hard last year in an unsuccessful effort to take Amiens and other points and thus separate the British forces from the French, the train passed over new track in what looked like a dead land. Farther north the orchards were in bloom and the meadows were green, but here for mile after mile, and mile after mile, every tree was

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stone-dead, so far as I could see, and most of the hedges were lifeless. In places almost nothing was green except new grass on the ridges between shell-holes. It gave me the impression of a wave of fire having rolled over the land. This was a part of the field known as the Somme. Thousands of wooden crosses tell the story of the many sanguinary battles fought on that field.

VII

Back Across the Path of the Hurricane

HOTEL CONTINENTAL, PARIS,
April 17, 1919.

I have just completed a tour which included all the towns in the northern part of France where there are Baptist churches. While on this tour I made my headquarters at Valenciennes and Lille, using the railway or electric cars when possible to do so, and an automobile for points to which the rails have not yet been relaid. As yet the vast railway system of northern France is largely unreconstructed, except for main trunk lines connecting principal centers. It will take much time to replace bridges and terminals and tracks where the Germans blew them up. The hotel situation also is frequently difficult in this area of occupation by the Germans for more than four years, and prices are exorbitant even for these days in France. As a Frenchman said to me, there seems to be no price on anything, except for a few articles on which the Government is protecting the people. To charge all that conditions will permit appears to be the rule.

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Valenciennes suffered greatly at the hands of the Germans when they were driven from the city in October, 1918, although most of the houses are standing. There are numerous ruins here and there, the coal-mines have been made useless for at least another year, and such utilities as telegraph, telephone, gas, and electricity are still unrestored. Railway stations have been improvised by the side of the ruins of large terminals, every manner of odd, old conveyance has been hunted up to take the place of the automobiles the Germans took away, and instead of baggage-delivery wagons there are boys with push-carts. The French are trying everywhere to make a start toward the restoration of normal life, and the patience with which they begin the colossal task of reconstruction, with facilities largely destroyed throughout a great area, is inspiring despite the pathos.

At Anzin, a suburb of Valenciennes, there was a small Baptist church, but the war scattered the membership. Anzin was badly injured and it is hard to forecast how many of the members of the little church will reestablish their homes in that city. A small building, privately owned, was used as a house of worship.

A Sunday afternoon was spent at Denain, a coal-mining center, seven miles from Valenciennes. The Germans needed coal, so the mines and the homes of the French miners were protected during the period of occupation. However, when the Ger-

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mans retreated in 1918 everything was done to ruin the mines that could be done before the city was evacuated. Here Pastor Philemon Vincent, of the Avenue du Maine Church, Paris, and Private Robert Farelly, of the French Army and son of the pastor at Denain, joined me. Pastor Vincent, who is an able man, is the president of the Franco-Belge Association and as such accompanied me for several days. He is an eloquent preacher and is represented to me as a scholarly man. His church is entirely self-supporting. Mr. Farelly, a nephew of Pastor Vincent, who had completed one year's study at Rochester Theological Seminary when he was called to the colors in 1914, served as my interpreter in northern France. Two days earlier my interpreter had been a Belgian soldier.

The church at Denain numbered one hundred before the war. Forty of the members joined the colors. Twelve of them were killed. As many as twelve families left during the war. Young men were sent to the front by the Germans to work in the trenches. A young man who was in the audience Sunday was starved into submission. For four days he refused to handle munitions that were being used to kill the French, but on the fifth day the pangs of hunger caused him to submit. I do not recall seeing anywhere more crape than was worn by the women in this audience of one hundred at Denain. One woman had lost her husband and two sons in the war. The people there suffered

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in many ways. A sympathetic response was in their faces when I gave them a French translation of a little poem published in a Boston paper on November 12, 1918, a part of which is as follows:

The dawn at last has broken,
And the war-worn people see
The vision of the blessed peace
That comes with victory.

You can hear the glad hosannas
From out the rescued sod,
And the right still holds the balance
In the sacred scales of God.

I have wondered sometimes how the people in the occupied areas stood the four years of humiliation, anxiety, and suffering of body and mind, and retained their sanity. At Denain I had confirmation of the stories that reached us of the conduct of the Germans. Mrs. Farelly's mother at eighty-four years of age was compelled to travel three days and nights in January in a compartment of a railway-carriage that was unheated and with a window-pane broken out. Persons under sixteen or over sixty years of age were permitted to travel to France by way of Switzerland.

Other fields visited this week were Bruay, Béthune, Rochelle, Roubaix, Croix, and Lens. The rain came down so heavily we could not secure transportation to Bruay for the meeting on Monday evening, where the people packed the small

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auditorium before they learned that neither by train nor automobile could we reach them. The next day we visited the neat building in the large coal-field, whose injury from shell-fire had been repaired. The pastor is now working in the mines and preaching Sundays. At Béthune the small "temple" has been closed ever since it was injured by shell-fire in 1916. The center of Béthune was completely demolished, and a railway has been constructed in the streets to remove the débris. As we were walking through the ruins a citizen remarked, "Just here seventeen non-combatants were found dead."

At Lens Pastor Farelly and his son, who had once spent eight years there and had directed the erection of "temple" and manse, could find nothing of the old place except two cellars filled with brick and broken timbers. All that day, as our automobile covered nearly one hundred and fifty miles, it was largely the same story of desolation. These destroyed towns in France are usually worse than destroyed. It would be better if there were nothing but meadows. Usually thousands of tons of débris must be carted off and the remaining chimneys must be toppled over and removed before any start can be made toward reconstruction.

I have tried in other letters to give you some idea of the devastated regions, but I have attempted the impossible. One must see it to realize the extent and completeness of the destruction. In many places it is almost literally true that not one stone

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is left on another, and nothing whatever can be found that is not broken. After looking over Lens I saw a pump amid the ruins, which at a distance appeared to be the only unbroken thing in the city—what was once a city. When I examined it I found it was like everything else in Lens and in hundreds of other places—ruined. But it is not merely the cities. The earth is turned over, and over again, in some of these areas. Near La Bassée the fields are blown into such billows that one received the impression of a gale at sea. To make the suggestion all the more striking, the bleached wreck of an airplane was much like a white gull that had fallen before the storm. These fields are danger-spots too. The French soldier who interpreted for me had heard that in four months possibly as many as five hundred civilians had been killed in handling the unexploded ammunition lying on the fields and in the trenches. One wishes he could compel the Germans to come and dig out all the shells that are hidden in the fields. Factories too have been annihilated, and it is estimated that around Lens six years will be required before the normal output of the mines can be restored. The mines have been wrecked and the machinery smashed after the shaft-houses were burned. An industrial commission from America told me they had found the machinery in a hundred factories in one small city completely demolished. They received the impression that the Germans, upon suffering military de-



In the Town of Château Thierry



Where the Face of the Earth Has Been Changed

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feat, did all they could in many towns to destroy industrial activity (or competition) for years to come.

As we traveled through the wide area of devastation Pastor Vincent said slowly something like this, which I jotted down as we rode along: "This is the two hundredth time in history that the Germans have invaded France. They will come again! They will come again! They will come again, unless they are met with force on the Rhine. They will come again! They will come again! Our children's children will fight again unless the League of Nations provides forces to control them. In Germany war is a chief industry." Pastor Vincent has reason to feel strongly. His two sons gave their lives in the war, one at Ypres and the other not far from Lens. When we came to a group of graves near the German line in front of Lens we read in French, "In Flanders Fields," and the American response to the Canadians' appeal to "take up the quarrel with the foe". . .

If ye break faith with us who die,
We shall not sleep.

Leaving the graves, we were soon on the Hindenburg Line whose reenforced concrete defenses, including the machine-gun "pill-boxes" and the dug-outs of the same material, appeared for a long time to make the German position impregnable. We did not tarry long, for the paths were too often

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bestrewn with unexploded grenades and other missiles. It is not yet a land for tourists. The British are working hard to fill the trenches in their area, pull up the thousands of miles of barbed-wire hedges, and gather the shells into dumps for explosion. Already some of the crooked trenches filled with new earth resemble the trails of serpents over the land.

The trenches can be filled in a year or so, but it will be many years before all the cities can be rebuilt. Indeed, some of them will never be rebuilt. In most cases little will be done this year except to make a beginning. Still it will come. In Lens not a shelter of any kind was left, and six months after the war only about one hundred people are reported to have returned to erect "shacks" of rusty sheet-iron and old boards, where thirty thousand people enjoyed life in 1914. Over one such "shack," where a lunch-counter has been opened, was the last thing I saw in Lens as we headed north for Roubaix and Croix. It was a sign on a freshly painted blue board: "A la Renaissance de la France." When people can come back to heaps of ashes and dust and there consecrate themselves to the rebirth of their country, let no one despair.

What we have seen these days will help to prepare us for the serious work in the several conferences in Paris next week. I have noticed that in most cases a Protestant church in France is known merely as *Église Évangélique*, "Evangelical

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Church." That is the name which appears over the doorway, and usually there is no denominational adjective. The distinctive mark of a Protestant church here is not that it is Methodist or Presbyterian or Baptist, but that it is *evangelical*. This is significant, and it indicates the line of cleavage in the mind of the populace. Will the efforts now proposed by Americans strengthen the emphasis on *evangelical*, or will they introduce new lines of division in the popular conception of Protestant Christianity?

VIII

The Extent of the Devastation

Major George B. Ford, a city- and town-planning engineer, has spent much time in France, first as a member of the American Industrial Commission and later as a director of the Bureau of Reconstruction and Relief of the Red Cross. He has published the following estimates of the extent of the injuries inflicted upon the portions of France that were exposed to the fury of the war:

The devastated area of France covers approximately 6,000 square miles. In that region 200,000 buildings were completely destroyed and 250,000 more were damaged. It is estimated that the value of the buildings totally destroyed alone is \$5,000,000,000. There is an additional loss of public works estimated at \$4,000,000,000.

The injury to farm lands and agricultural implements is \$2,000,000,000. The war rendered 3,000,000 acres useless for cultivation. Two hundred and fifty thousand farms were situated in the devastated area. The French Government calculates that the following agricultural implements will have to be supplied to the farmers:

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51,000 side-hill plows,
33,000 plain plows,
56,000 cultivators,
88,000 harrows,
16,000 beet extractors,
36,000 seed-drills,
18,000 horse-rakes,
53,000 root-cutters,
30,000 mowing-machines,
115,000 farm wagons,
50,000 rollers,
48,000 hoes,
13,000 fertilizer-spreaders,
21,000 winnowing-machines,
32,000 reapers and binders.

Nine hundred thousand cattle were carried into Germany. Soon after the war it was almost impossible to find a horse or a cow or an ox, or any other domestic animal, in the area that had been occupied by the Germans.

Industrially France is terribly crippled. Before the war 22,000,000 tons of iron ore were produced in France, over half of which came from the basins occupied for four years by the Germans. Seventenths of the coal supply of France had come from the basins that were in the hands of the enemy.

Machinery in thousands of factories was broken to pieces, if it was not carried into Germany, and will have to be replaced before France can develop

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her industries in the devastated areas. In the textile industry of France there were 7,500,000 cotton spindles, 4,500,000 of which were destroyed or carried into Germany. Out of 550,000 linen spindles in the devastated regions, 500,000 were destroyed or taken to Germany.

Before the war France had 210 sugar refineries, 140 of which were in the invaded region. The machinery in all of the 140 was smashed or removed, and the same is true of electrical power companies, machine-shops, and foundries.

It is estimated that the Germans destroyed 1,000,000 acres of forest land. The total damage in the north of France, including buildings, furniture, industries, public works, and farms, is estimated at about \$15,000,000,000. Then there is the damage to the soil. For mile after mile the traveler crosses fields that have been turned over by shell-fire, and gashed with rows of deep dugouts and networks of trenches. Often the top soil has been turned under, and there is nothing in sight but a chalky clay which will not produce a harvest. There are 250,000 acres of land in such condition, on which forests must be planted, in the hope that in half a century, or possibly much longer, a leaf-mold will produce a new humus. Many boat-loads of small trees are being sent from the United States to reforest fields in France. Besides the land that is hopelessly beyond the state of cultivation in the near future, there are about 2,000,000



The Town of Vaux, in the Château Thierry Region



A Common Sight

Many Forests Were Completely Destroyed

THE EXTENT OF THE DEVASTATION

acres which must be salvaged, leveled, and fertilized before any crops can be planted.

Both the American and French armies during the war cut large quantities of wood for their own use. Lumber will be given to France in time in return for the trees that were cut down by the Americans and the French, but the deliveries cannot be accomplished fast enough to cover the present emergency. It is expected too that large quantities will be brought from Germany. Meanwhile building is fearfully expensive. Farm barracks, consisting of two rooms and a shed, cost about \$900.

Major Ford says: "There are in all about sixty relief units working in the devastated territory, most of which are wholly or partly supported by American funds. There is room for all of them."

IX

Glimpses of American Battle-fields

April 18.

After nearly five weeks of close application to the task that brought me here, I was glad to avail myself of an opportunity to be the guest of the Visitors Bureau of the American Army for two days, before going into the formal conferences next week which are to conclude my work in France. Bright and early this morning an American officer was at my hotel in Paris with an army automobile to take several visitors to the railway station, where we found a compartment reserved for us on the express-train that swept quickly up the valley of the Marne and past many of the towns and cities whose names we heard often during the war.

Our party consisted of two members of an Industrial Commission from the United States, the commercial attaché of the American Embassy at Paris, and myself. I soon discovered that my companions on the tour are wide-awake, congenial gentlemen. In the same compartment on the train were two mature women, wearing the "Y" uniform. They were just back from London, where

GLIMPSES OF AMERICAN BATTLE-FIELDS

their special work was on the streets at night, separating American soldiers from spiders that weave webs of several sorts.

At Bar-le-Duc, a town known to most of the American soldiers who were actually engaged in the combat, we were met at noon by Captain J. Andre Fouilhaux, of Portland, Oregon, who is our escort for the two-days' tour of the St. Mihiel salient, the Verdun front, and the Argonne Forest. Captain Fouilhaux was born and reared in France, but is now an American citizen, and served on some of the very fields we are visiting. Quickly we were speeding northeastward, in a heavy army automobile, over roads that a few months ago were congested with troops, trucks, and artillery. At numerous points along the way the movements of the army had been concealed from the view of the enemy by the use of many miles of artificial hedges, constructed of boughs, or by camouflaged screens. And the camouflage along many miles of roadway was but a small part of the gigantic task of preparing to move an army. How little have we realized the colossal character of the preparations to defeat the Hun.

Our first stop was in the little town of St. Mihiel, which was almost at the southwestern tip of the salient that the Germans drove into the French lines in 1914, and which had remained like a thorn in the flesh of France for four years, when in September, 1918, the Americans, assisted by the French army,

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straightened the line. The town of St. Mihiel was well within the German lines for four years, and the artillery on such high points as Montsec appeared to command the situation. The permanent character of the cemetery the Germans made for their soldier dead and the inscriptions on the gravestones cause a visitor to wonder if they were not preparing to hold that part of France always as an addition to Lorraine, which lies a few miles eastward. The inscriptions on the gravestones are interesting, and they reveal the feelings of the Germans for their sons who fell in battle: "For Fatherland"; "Tranquil Rest"; "Rest in Peace." This inscription was on perhaps half the gravestones, "Here rests in God." Several others I copied: "For Germany's honor, our brave companions suffered the heroes' death"; "He fell for the Fatherland"; "You died in true fulfilment of your duty"; "Your dear memory remains holy and unforgettable in our minds"; "In deep pain, your parents and sisters."

One corner of the cemetery had been set apart for the French soldiers who fell in St. Mihiel. And it must be said to the credit of the Germans that a rather handsome monument had been erected near the graves of the French.

It was interesting to visit the principal points on the field of what was intended by General Pershing to be the scene of the first American offensive. Unanticipated developments called our soldiers to

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participate in a stirring way at the Château-Thierry front, in cooperation with the French, and there had been such engagements as the one at Cantigny, but the first American offensive, deliberately planned as such, was on the St. Mihiel field, where 550,000 Americans were engaged in battle and our artillery fired more than 1,000,000 shells in four hours. The magnitude of the engagement may be appreciated when it is remembered that only about 100,000 soldiers fought on the Northern side in the battle of Gettysburg. The strength of the German position around St. Mihiel consisted not merely in the occupation of the high elevations, such as Montsec. The permanent living quarters which the German officers and soldiers had dug for themselves in the stony and precipitous hillsides that were protected from the fire of the Allies, gave them an added sense of security. These dugouts usually consisted of a small front living-room, furnished with stove, tables, chairs, and smaller comforts, while permanent bunks or beds filled the chambers still further underground. In front of some of the officers' quarters, there was a rather ornate veranda built of stone taken from the hillside. Altogether the picture made one think of the homes of the cliff-dwellers in Arizona and Colorado.

Our route took us along the southern line of what had been the St. Mihiel sector, through Apremont, Bouconville, Rambucourt, Beaumont, Flirey, Limey, and other towns. No, our route took us

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where once there were towns bearing these names, but where today there is little left except silent ruins, miles of trenches and dugouts, thickets of barbed wire, and camouflaged artillery emplacements. The territory on which many of the American soldiers had their first baptism of fire is much like other battle-fields, although the engagement here was of such short duration that the land has not been turned over and over again as is true at numerous other points. But each field has its own interesting marks. Here for instance, we could see to the north the "bird nests" in the tops of high trees, which were concealed by the foliage in September, and made excellent observation posts, or bases for sharpshooters. On the American side a hollow armored stump of a fallen tree, with an underground entrance, served a similar purpose. This was the line on which our men faced the Germans on September 12, 1918. Three days later that particular thorn in the side of France had been removed, and the line was straightened. Leaving the south line of the sector, we swung north across the field over which our men had made such rapid advance on September 12. I heard more than one soldier say that the Germans retreated so rapidly in the St. Mihiel salient that the American artillery could not be brought up fast enough to keep up with the Germans; that when the guns would be placed, often it was found that the Germans were out of range. Now this must not be taken to mean

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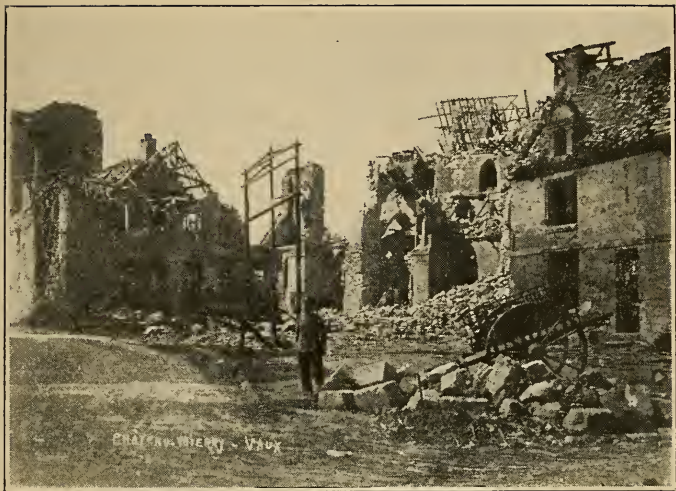
that the Germans were not strongly fortified. As we swung north, we crossed line after line of German "pill-boxes." The "pill-box," every one knows, was a heavy reenforced concrete shelter for a machine-gun. The walls were several feet thick, with horizontal slits on three sides of the little fort, through which machine-gunners could pour several hundred shots per minute upon advancing infantry. These machine-gun fortifications were so placed that if the infantry tried to flank one of them they ran squarely into the face of another. And there was more than one line of the "pill-boxes." It appeared that several lines of such fortifications had been constructed for use by the Germans, should they be compelled to retreat from one to another. With such lines of fortifications, it would appear as if one German might have held ten men on the other side. Nor must it be assumed that the morale of the German soldiers was so low that they gladly retreated. Our men paid dearly for their advance in the St. Mihiel salient.

Nearly all the villages were destroyed, and the land was swept bare. Battle-fields of France are not like those of the Civil War in the United States. In France about six thousand square miles of territory has been left desolate, with here and there parts of towns or villages undestroyed. Over much of it the signs of residence have been so completely removed that one almost forgets that people ever lived there. This vast waste looks as if a great

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hurricane had swept over it. The only human touch to the picture on many fields is the silent wooden crosses. In truth this great gash across the face of France is civilization's Via Dolorosa.

We found thousands of negro troops engaged in reconstructing the roads of the destroyed country and collecting the "duds," as one of the negroes called the tons of unexploded shells on all the fields. This negro trooper came up and, after giving Captain Fouilhaux a snappy salute, said: "The captain says you had better move on. We are going to explode a pile of duds." As we approached Thiaucourt we saw negro soldiers searching the fields over which the Forty-second, the Eighty-ninth, the Second, and the Fifth divisions of our Army fought on September 12. They were locating the graves of the Americans who fell on that day of terrific fighting, and who were buried quickly just where they fell—in shell-holes, perhaps. From September until April the bodies had been lying there, with khaki as their only shroud, and now they were being exhumed for reinterment in the large American military cemetery at Thiaucourt. It was rather singular that in the late afternoon of Good Friday we should witness such a scene. Were we not looking on a slope of humanity's Golgotha while the instruments of death and even the blood-spots were still visible? Squads of men in khaki were digging in the earth, and what they found they were rolling in large cloths and depositing in plain wooden boxes



The Town of Vaux, in the Château Thierry Region



A Common Sight

Many Forests Were Completely Destroyed

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that were piled on large motor-trucks. It was a solemn scene, but ten minutes later the scene was still more solemn.

Coming to what had been the town of Thiaucourt, we discovered that thousands of new graves were being made, and the colored troops were coming from the fields with those plain wooden boxes, which were opened again, when each body was identified. The sight was gruesome beyond all description, and it is not proper to try to relate here all the details. White officers, wearing rubber gloves, sought first to establish the identity of each body by looking for the tag worn about the neck. If the tag was not there the pockets were searched for something to identify the soldier, or perhaps the tag itself would be found somewhere else on the person. Then trinkets would be found to be sent back to the families in America, after being properly sterilized. While we were there they found on the body of one soldier a locket, suspended to a chain, and containing a girl's picture and a lock of hair. On the same body was found a gold watch and a fountain-pen. On another was what they pronounced an excellent diary that the soldier had kept right up to the day of his death. One did not care to look long on such a scene, and we wondered how the soldiers engaged in such a task could go through with their work week after week.

Lieutenant Keating, of Erie, Pa., was in charge of the work at the cemetery. I said to him: "Lieutenant

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tenant, how do you ever stand this work? Isn't it harder than going over the top?" He replied: "I have been over the top three times; that was momentary. This work here has been going on since January." And then with the soldier's spirit, as if to catch himself, he said: "But we get our reward. There is great satisfaction in being able to identify a body which had not been identified before, and to write a mother or a father or a sister in America that the grave is now properly marked." "It is a great satisfaction too," he added, "to be able to send back to the people at home something to keep, like the locket that we found since you came, or the watch, or the diary." He told me also that he believed ninety-eight out of every hundred of the American dead in the St. Mihiel salient would be identified.

As we were about to board our car for Moraigne Farm, where we were to spend the night, two or three miles to the south of us there shot up into the heavens a great volume of smoke which looked like a geyser a thousand feet in height, and a moment later there was a terrific report. The great pile of "duds" of which the negro had warned us had been exploded. Following the explosion, the six men in our automobile sat in silence for mile after mile. But it was not the noise we had just heard that made us silent. Evidently every one had been deeply impressed by what we had just seen on the fields of France in the soft light of the late

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afternoon of Good Friday. After the rapid fire of conversation that had gone on ever since we left Paris in the early morning, the absolute silence was significant. At last one of the members of the Industrial Commission spoke up: "And they were doing it in such a beautiful spirit." Clearly, all of us had been thinking of the same thing. Perhaps I may be forgiven for attempting to indicate briefly my own feelings. At the moment when I looked on the blackened bodies of our noble soldiers, first I thought: "And these are men who left America in a blaze of glory. Surely some good must come from such a sacrifice. What will it be?" Somehow (I hardly know why) there then flashed into my soul this question, "In the light of what these men passed through, what mean some of the ecclesiastical discussions that seem to occupy the thought of many people?" The question lingered with me during the period of silence as we continued northward. Such reflections as these came: "It is Good Friday, and here we are on the Calvary of the Nations! How can we avoid another such conflict? There is no hope except as men catch the spirit of Christ on Calvary. Henry Watterson was right when he said that democracy is but a side issue; that Christianity is the bed-rock of civilization." Again I reflected, "But something more vital than our conventional Christianity will be required to prevent the recurrence of such a conflict as that through which we have been passing." Once more

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I vowed to try to stand for reality in religion, and against formal ecclesiasticism. Who shall deliver us?

April 19.

After the visit to the St. Mihiel salient the night was spent at Moraigue Farm, which for four years and more was a German army corps headquarters. The Kaiser is supposed to have spent some time at this point while the war was in progress. Today the old French château is being used by the American Army as a stopping-place for the guests of its Visitors Bureau, and perhaps last night some of us slept in the bed once occupied by the Kaiser. The place still bears many placards in the German language and other marks of occupation by the enemy. A dummy German tank, a German aeroplane, and several German guns in the front yard are among the numerous trophies that have been brought in from the fields. In one of the rooms may be found a very full collection of the many different kinds of weapons used in the war by the several armies. The farm is some miles north of the line on which the Germans were making their last stand when the armistice was signed, and in consequence the surrounding country has not been shot to pieces.

We were off early in the morning for the ride to Verdun and across the Meuse-Argonne field. Most of the main thoroughfares are now in good repair,

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but it has taken much work to fill in the craters where mines beneath the road-bed were exploded to hinder the advance of troops. Some of these roads had been camouflaged, on both sides and overhead as well, so that an army might be moved in daylight under the cover of what would appear from the air to be a stretch of luxuriant foliage.

It is futile to attempt to describe conditions around Verdun, where, we were told, five hundred thousand men were killed outright, not to mention the larger number who were wounded. The upturned earth for miles around defies description. We caught our first glimpse of the famous city as we came over a high ridge when the sun was immediately behind us and throwing its bright light on the shattered town in the distance. From the hill-top we could look down upon the serpentine trenches that zigzagged their ways across the fields and up the steep hillsides. To our right were the famous forts, which were the scenes of much terrific combat. These fortified hills, large enough to be called mountains, are now entirely barren and apparently as lifeless as heaps of ashes. While the town of Verdun was not completely destroyed, it was so badly shelled as to make the destruction a bit more appalling than if it were so leveled that no human beings could find shelter there. And the earth for miles around looks as if a rain of shells and gas and fire had fallen from out of the heavens—or better, as if there had been upheavals out of hell. Here

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too silence was reigning. There was no noise of machinery, no smoke from factory chimneys, and little to disturb the quiet of the springtime morning, except the "honk-honk" of the army automobiles.

Few names will live in history like that of Verdun. First and last, about seven-tenths of the entire French army passed through that point of the front. Its fall would have had a disastrous effect upon the morale of the French people, for it was the strongest of all of their fortified cities. Had Verdun fallen, the French nation might fairly have believed the German armies completely invincible. Captain Fouilhaux secured permission for us to visit the underground citadel. In 1734 the French began to construct the subterranean quarters with stone floors, walls, and ceiling, to accommodate twenty-eight thousand soldiers at one time, as a defensive measure against Germany. That citadel, with nearly five miles of stone galleries, was completed in 1814. The Germans knew its strength, and they knew as well that if it could be taken, all France would be made to tremble. Had there been no such citadel, probably Verdun would have fallen. From the underground barracks, about fifteen miles of tunnels were dug in 1915 and 1916 to the forts outside the city, in order to furnish the heavy artillery with supplies.

Coming up out of the citadel, which is ninety steps below the surface of the city, one finds a large Y. M. C. A. hut, where four American girls are on

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active duty and working for the hundreds of men, with apparently as much zeal as if the war were still in progress. Close by the "Y" is the famous cathedral of Verdun, where soldiers of several nations gathered on the morning of November 11, when it was known that the armistice had been signed. There is a good story going the rounds regarding that particular moment, which is worth repeating, especially since it has been confirmed to me by a most reliable person.

A most terrific bombardment was in progress on the morning of the armistice, and just before eleven o'clock, the story goes, it seemed as if both armies were trying to fire all their shells. At eleven o'clock sharp the bombardment ceased, and, strange to say, once more there was absolute silence around Verdun. Soldiers who were free to do so rushed to the cathedral, and those who knew English began to sing with one accord, "Praise God from whom all blessings flow." Almost instinctively the men of several nations, crowding the building, fell upon their knees. The few English who were there, were kneeling with their hands clasped and their upturned faces catching the light through the broken roof of the old cathedral. American soldiers kneeled with heads bowed low. French soldiers crossed themselves devoutly. Algerian soldiers, true to the Mohammedan practice, beat their heads against the stone floor. With all the variations, there was one central purpose and desire—to thank

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the Eternal for the victory that had come. They all believed in God.

Leaving Verdun, we must have traveled twenty or twenty-five miles without seeing a place where civilians lived. If there were buildings at all, they were barracks for troops or camps for prisoners. When we reached the top of hill 304, we stood where the hurricane had reached its height, where every inch of ground had been contested, and where it seemed impossible to find a square foot of earth that had not been blasted by shell-fire. Everywhere it was the same story of absolute ruin and silence. At one point there was a sign-board bearing the name of the village which had once existed. There was little else to identify the spot.

Montfaucon was the town where the Crown Prince of Germany had his chief observation post back of the Verdun line, during those years when he was trying to build a pyramid of shells so high that he could catch a sight of the city his guns were storming. Montfaucon is completely ruined, with the exception of one large house. Inside that house there had been constructed for the Crown Prince a heavy concrete tower, from the top of which he could look in every direction for eight or ten miles. Concrete walls a few feet in front of the tower furnished additional protection, and it is said that the Crown Prince, sitting in the cellar, used a periscope to enable him in still greater safety to observe the movements of his army. His personal

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safety seemed important! But the American "doughboy" took the measure of the Crown Prince, and upon reaching the old house, the visitor is amazed to find our soldiers' names and addresses written over its walls. From the road in front of the house I picked up many American cartridges. The hills to the east and to the west are not marked with trenches, for the American soldiers fighting there did not have time to dig themselves in. When the Meuse-Argonne campaign first opened and the Germans had started to retreat, the doughboys found time merely to dig "fox-holes" for themselves as a measure of protection from the flying shells.

The greatest of all the American campaigns was that known as the Meuse-Argonne. For a long time Marshal Foch had desired to move toward Sedan and capture the four-track railway, which constituted Germany's chief line of communication with her base of supplies and almost paralleled the western front. Marshal Foch believed that if this railroad could be destroyed Germany's main military nerve would be cut, but after four years of fighting the French army alone was not prepared for the sheer recklessness and audacity and sacrifice of men required to break the German line in the Argonne Forest, while holding the German troops at numerous other points. For four years the Germans had been strongly fortified in that densely wooded region, that is broken by deep ravines and marshes. I saw no battle-field that seemed to offer greater

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difficulties to the invading force. One would think that it would have been impossible to drive the Germans from such a stronghold. But here again, audacity, and the spirit of crusaders, and the strength of numbers, won the day.

The first success of the American troops in the Argonne Forest was due largely to the element of surprise in the attack. For four years the French had held the line which had been practically stationary since 1914. After the St. Mihiel salient was wiped out, the Germans, it is believed, expected the Americans to make a further attack in that general region. But in a short time hundreds of thousands of troops were taken by night from the St. Mihiel field to the Argonne front and were all but hidden there. Thus, by the night of September 26, an American army of 1,200,000 men, including all the supporting forces as well as the combat troops, was ready for the Meuse-Argonne campaign. There were several thousand pieces of artillery in the line which was fifteen miles long. The guns stood almost hub-to-hub, we were told, when the barrage was ordered to begin at 1.30 o'clock at night. The American soldiers occupied the front-line trenches just before midnight, relieving the French, who quietly went to the rear. The thunderous barrage from the guns lasted for several hours, and just before daybreak the American forces went over the top. They went in wave after wave, in such irresistible numbers that they overwhelmed the Ger-

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mans. Steadily, although slowly, after the first few days of fighting, the Germans were driven north, and by November 7 the American artillery commanded Germany's four-track railway, which constituted her chief dependence in supplying her armies. At the same time the French and the British were advancing all along the northwestern sectors. On November 11 the war was practically over. From a military standpoint this was America's greatest contribution.

For possibly twenty miles we were riding through the Argonne Forest today. For the most part the woods are dense. In one of the densest portions we stopped to walk where the automobile could not go, and coming to a deep ravine we found rows of dugouts in which German officers had lived for several years with a degree of comfort. One of them had been occupied by the Crown Prince of Bavaria. In both his bedroom and his bathroom I picked up American cartridges. Cartridges I found too, scattered through the forest, as well as gas-masks, helmets, smokeless powder, cases of shells, cooking utensils, and empty tin cans around the ashes of campfires. Here also the sheer recklessness of our men, who were not tired from years of warfare and who had not learned to conserve their man-power, proved to be real strategy. But it should not be thought that the Germans were weak along the Argonne line, for forty German divisions were thrown against our troops.

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Our automobile dashed suddenly out of the forest to what had been the left end of the American line, and we turned once more toward Bar-le-Duc. Almost instantly we were in a different world, back where the tides of battle had not been running; back where there were smiling farms and where the trees and flowers had not been torn by shot and shell. Our last stop for the day was at an American cemetery containing possibly five hundred graves of our own men who were wounded at the front and died at the hospital close by their place of burial. Before midnight we were back in Paris. A few hours later it was Easter morn, and Christendom was thinking of resurrection and life.

X

America's Part in the War

No one would claim that America's sacrifice was comparable in volume with that of any one of several other nations engaged in the great conflict. America's contribution, however, came at a time when the issue seemed to be in the balance, and when the pound thrown into the scales on the right side assured victory for the forces of democracy. The figures given here are not presented with any thought that we have whereof to boast, but rather to prove what the American people can accomplish when they gird themselves for a specific task.

The War Department of the United States Government has published the following table, which summarizes America's participation in the war:

Total armed forces, including Army,	
Navy, Marine Corps.....	4,800,000
Total men in the Army.....	4,000,000
Men who went overseas.....	2,086,000
Men who fought in France.....	1,390,000
Tons of supplies shipped from	
America to France.....	7,500,000
Total registered in draft.....	24,234,021

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Total draft inductions.....	2,810,296
Cost of war to April 30, 1919.....	\$21,850,000,000
Battles fought by American troops.....	13
Days of battle.....	200
Days of duration of Meuse-Argonne battle	47
American battle deaths in war.....	48,900
American wounded in war.....	236,000
American deaths from disease.....	56,991
Total deaths in the Army.....	112,422

The War Department has published many other striking figures. As many as 306,000 men were sent overseas in a single month. And recently as many as 333,000 have been returned to America in one month's time. In nineteen months, while the American Army was in action, the United States Government shipped 7,500,000 tons of supplies to France. For the draft 24,234,021 were registered, and of these 2,810,296 were inducted into service. The total number of inductions, recruitments, etc., from April 6, 1917, to November 11, 1918, was 4,000,000, and the total armed force, including Army, Navy, and Marine Corps, was 4,800,000, or five men for each one hundred of our total population. About 200,000 commissioned officers were required, when at the beginning less than 9,000 were available. As many as 1,200,000 men were thrown into a single offensive, the Meuse-Argonne.

The fastest of the troop-ships made complete

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round trips and started back again in nineteen days. The Army's cargo fleet was almost exclusively American and amounted to 2,600,000 dead-weight tons.

Between April 6, 1917, and May 31, 1918, there were delivered to the Army 131,800,000 pairs of wool stockings, 85,000,000 undershirts, 83,000,000 drawers, 30,700,000 pairs of shoes, 26,500,000 flannel shirts, 21,700,000 blankets, 21,700,000 wool breeches, 13,900,000 wool coats, and 8,300,000 overcoats. American engineers built eighty-three new ship berths in France and 1,000 miles of standard and 538 miles of narrow-gauge railroads. The Signal Corps strung 100,000 miles of telephone wires. Forty thousand American-made motor-trucks were shipped overseas. Army construction projects in America cost twice as much as the Panama Canal, and overseas they were conducted on a scale almost as large.

When war was declared the Army had on hand about 600,000 Springfield rifles. When the armistice was signed the total number of rifles produced was 2,500,000, and by the close of last year 226,557 machine-guns had been manufactured here. When the armistice was signed America had produced 3,500,000,000 rounds of ammunition, and half of it had been shipped overseas, in addition to the 100,000,000 rounds secured from the British and French. The American Army had 3,500 pieces of artillery in France, nearly 500 of which were made

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in America, and there were in use on the firing-line 2,250 pieces, of which over 100 were made in America. Of the 2,698 planes sent to the front for the American Air Force, 667 were of American make. The production of the twelve-cylinder Liberty engines was America's chief contribution to the Allies. Before the armistice 13,574 had been completed, 4,435 shipped to the Expeditionary Forces, and 1,025 delivered to the Allies. American divisions were in battle for two hundred days.

From the middle of August until the end of the war the American divisions held during the greater part of the time a front longer than that held by the British.

In October the American divisions held 101 miles of line, or 23 per cent of the entire western front.

In the battle of St. Mihiel 550,000 Americans were engaged as compared with about 100,000 on the Northern side in the battle of Gettysburg. The artillery fired more than 1,000,000 shells in four hours, which is the most intense concentration of artillery fire recorded in history.

The Meuse-Argonne battle lasted forty-seven days, during which 1,200,000 American troops were engaged.

The typical American campaign unit was the division, composed of about 1,000 officers and 27,000 enlisted men. When the armistice was signed 42 American divisions had been trained and sent to Europe. Twelve other divisions were in training in America, and still four more were being organized. The Army Department was planning to have 80 divisions in France by July, 1919, and 100 divis-

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ions by January, 1920. Barracks had been constructed in a few months to care for 1,800,000 men in training-camps.

The war cost, up to April 30, 1919, \$21,850,000,000. When the armistice was signed 4,800,000 men were under arms, and 112,422 American soldiers had been killed in action or had died from wounds or from disease. The total casualty list at that date was 342,991. In one battle, 1,200,000 Americans had been engaged with 120,000 casualties. Two out of every three men sent to France were at some time in action.

It has been estimated that the total number of deaths in battle alone for all belligerents in the great war was 7,450,200, divided as follows:

Russia	1,700,000
Germany	1,600,000
France	1,385,000
Great Britain	900,000
Austria	800,000
Italy	330,000
Turkey	250,000
Serbia and Montenegro.....	125,000
Belgium	102,000
Rumania	100,000
Bulgaria	100,000
United States	48,900
Greece	7,000
Portugal	2,000

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The above figures include only those killed outright in battle. The total of those who died from wounds and disease, or who were not mortally wounded, is far larger.

If the American people could organize their forces to make such a contribution in a campaign that was necessarily destructive, the world has a right to expect much of us in the period of reconstruction. Since our sacrifices were not nearly so great as those of several other countries, we are under the great obligation to accept a large part of the responsibility for reconstructive effort in various parts of the earth.

XI

Final Conferences in France

EN ROUTE, PARIS TO LONDON,
April 28, 1919.

After spending six full weeks here, including the brief visit to Belgium, I am now traveling to England, where I am to spend a few days in conference with Baptist representatives before sailing for America. Just now I can send you merely a brief statement covering my last ten days in France, which were given chiefly to formal conferences and personal interviews. These conferences with groups, and interviews with individuals, enabled me to secure much additional information from Baptists and from Protestants in general.

Easter Sunday I spoke at three Baptist churches in Paris. The neat "temple" at Colombes (Rev. E. Raynaud, pastor) was well filled at the morning hour. At 2.30 in the afternoon I spoke to the Bonne Nouvelle Baptist Church where M. Guyot serves as lay-pastor. The congregation worships in one of the halls of the McAll Mission. At five o'clock there was a union Baptist meeting at the Rue de Lille Church, where Rev. A. Blocher, a

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son-in-law of Doctor Saillens, is pastor. The evening was spent at the home of Rev. Henri Merle d'Aubigne, one of the leading forces in the McAll Mission, a man of broad education and rather unusual gifts. In passing I may say that the work of the McAll Mission has been greatly demoralized by the war, as is true of Christian work in general.

Monday a conference was held with the official committee of the Franco-Belge Association. Several pastors from northern France and Belgium, not members of the committee, were invited to Paris for the conference. I raised numerous questions regarding the reconstruction work that must be undertaken in the devastated areas and requested the committee to consider several general matters. Pastor Vincent, who is a forceful man, greatly beloved by his own church and respected by other denominations as well, is chairman of the committee. Several rather strong laymen constitute half the membership of the official board of this Association. Before the war the Association was raising eighty-five per cent of the total expenditures on its field. Most of the churches in this Association were in what is now a devastated region or in the sections occupied by the Germans for four years. This means that they must begin all over again, and in a region where normal conditions will not return for a good many years. The information of greatest value received in this conference, as well as the recommendations growing out of it,

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will be brought to your attention at the meeting in Denver together with the findings of other conferences held last week. The years of suffering have told on the souls and bodies of these people who at several places were the only evangelical Christian forces at work, and there would seem to be little hope for them if they were left to their own resources. I marvel that they are not bitter. A visitor who ascertains what they have passed through finds it difficult to refrain from some violent expression of his feelings. The magnitude of Germany's crime seems greater and greater as I go here and there in the wake of the war which left wreckage far vaster than I had imagined. I have seen the devastation at many points from Belgium to the borders of Switzerland. Until one has seen how vast it is he can hardly believe it. Yet our people there (and those who *were* there) face the future with courage. I am sure that the knowledge of your interest in them has given them new hope.

On Tuesday I met with the official board of the Franco-Swiss Association. It was pleasing to find these men saying, "Go first to the relief of the Northern Association." None of their own churches were in the devastated area. On Wednesday I met with representatives of the two associations in joint session. On Thursday they were left to themselves to discuss in French the numerous questions that had been raised. I took advantage of the recess

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to see a bit of the McAll Mission work. That evening the findings of the joint conference were presented. On Friday morning and Saturday evening I met groups representing the two associations for discussion of points that were not clear to me. Statistical tables have been prepared that give the most accurate information obtainable, and translations of the findings are being prepared, all of which I hope to place in your hands at Denver, together with my recommendations. Unfortunately, Doctor Saillens was unable, on account of engagements in England that were made long ago, to attend any of these conferences.

After full discussion with the Baptist bodies I had the pleasure of a conference with the French Protestant Committee, which is composed of very able men. Its chairman, the Hon. Paul Fuzier, is a state counselor of high rank. The other members are thoroughly representative educators, pastors, and business men. I spoke very frankly as to how I thought American evangelicals might render assistance to the Protestant movement in France, and I invited criticism of plans that were under consideration in our denominational conferences. The discussion was helpful in several ways, and the echoes which reached me later confirm me in the feeling that our motives are not misunderstood, and that the most influential Protestant groups in France will welcome an enlargement of effort on the part of American Baptists not only in general

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reconstruction work but in helping the Baptists of France to become a stronger force in the evangelical ranks. The conferences with the French Protestant Committee and the interviews with the secretary, Rev. André Monod, have been exceedingly satisfactory.

In the joint Baptist conference at which the findings were presented, Dr. J. Whitcomb Brougher, of Los Angeles, and Army Chaplain W. O. Lewis, of William Jewell College, were present and expressed their satisfaction at the conclusions reached. Yesterday Doctor Brougher spoke at the Rue de Lille Church. Earlier in the week I had enjoyed meeting Dr. Arthur C. Baldwin, of our Board, and Dr. Allyn K. Foster, who was formerly a member. Three weeks ago I encountered Dr. Herbert S. Johnson, who wished me to say to you that in his judgment there is a great call today for real evangelistic effort here as well as at home.

These hurriedly written letters which I have sent you whenever I could find time to write, may not have proved of much value to you, but perhaps they will help to prepare your minds for the report which I am to place in your hands at Denver. Purposely I have avoided the political questions of the hour, for the very good reason that I know little more, if anything, about them than is known in America. You may be surprised at hearing that during my six weeks in France not more than six people, I think, have mentioned the Peace Conference to me.

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Usually I have had to introduce the subject. The bitter experience of the French and the condition of their country in several respects naturally makes them more impatient at delay, however necessary that delay may be, than is true for us whose wounds are less deep and whose borders are far from Germany. There are some other questions connected with the war, in which the American people are interested, but a discussion of them is not properly a part of my report at present.

THE FINDINGS OF THE CONFERENCE OF FRENCH AND BELGIAN BAPTIST REPRESENTATIVES, IN PARIS, APRIL 23 AND 24, 1919, WITH SECRETARY J. H. FRANKLIN

The Conference expresses its humble and profound gratitude to the Almighty for the miraculous victory granted to the soldiers of right and justice.

The war has left France in the sad condition of the man who fell among thieves, and the various descriptions which we might attempt are all summed up in the words of Luke 10 : 30, "who stripped him and beat him, and departed, leaving him half dead," having, as his only hope, the compassion of some good Samaritan.

We feel that more than ever France wishes to revive in every department of life, and that she is called upon to have an increasingly important place in the vanguard of nations. France is therefore an



French and Belgian Baptist Pastors and Laymen, and Secretary Franklin, Who Were in Conference in Paris

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exceptional strategic field for Christian work. This spirit of revival is specially noticeable in evangelical circles. On the other hand, the intensity of our present affliction favors the manifestation of the consoling and restoring power of the gospel.

Moreover, the Roman Catholic dogma of absolutism has been discredited more than ever during the war. The times are favorable for the preaching of the gospel of personal religion. Protestantism, which has been the salt of France in the past, has an unparalleled opportunity at such a time as this. Evangelical Christianity alone can meet the present need of the nations.

1. Would an understanding with other denominations be advisable in view of an apportionment of fields of work, in order to avoid unnecessary duplication of efforts?

The Conference deems an immediate understanding on this point advisable. The Committees of the two Associations have been empowered to deal with that question.

2. In what measure can we help our brethren of the devastated regions?

This question concerns the Franco-Belgian Association, whose Committee has handed proposals to Doctor Franklin. Having been acquainted with this fact, the Conference unanimously expresses its gratefulness for the interest shown by American Baptists to our tried churches. The repre-

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sentatives of the Franco-Swiss Association seize this opportunity to declare their very earnest desire to see the work of reconstruction have the prior claim over any other interest.

We fully approve of the policy of sharing American Baptist war help with our tried brethren of the other denominations. Common sufferings have contributed to improve relations between the various Protestant bodies and we have welcomed the foundation of the "Comité d'Union Protestante pour les Secours de Guerre en France et en Belgique" (Protestant Union Committee for War Help) and we are grateful for its activities.

3. Would it not be desirable to build huts which might be used as temporary places of worship and "foyers," including a heated shelter, reading-rooms, etc., and likely to become a means of evangelization?

The Assembly is struck by the urgency and usefulness of such a method. It endorses heartily Doctor Franklin's suggestion, and is ready to find qualified men and women, when funds shall have been made available.

4. Should destroyed chapels be rebuilt on the same spot?

The Franco-Belgian Federation has handed to Doctor Franklin a reply to this question.

5. How should war orphans be cared for?

After considering various methods of action we are of the opinion that it is desirable to use orphan-

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ages only as a last resort. The best would be to make regular grants to the mother or relatives of orphans, or, when this is not possible, to entrust the children to Christian families at a fixed price. A commission having been appointed for the purpose of ascertaining the expenditure, has reported that two francs would be needed per day in orphanages, and three francs in families. These quotations do not include the small state appropriations.

6. What effect has the economic situation had upon the present contributive powers of the churches?

In the devastated areas, the economic situation is still very unsatisfactory. In many places, industry is at a standstill, and the contributive faculties are not a tithe of what they were before the war.

With regard to churches in other areas, the contributive faculty has not kept pace with the increased expenditures, as can be understood by the enclosed schedule of rise in prices.

7. France has a great need of Christian literature. Would appropriate American translations be welcome, and could not steps be taken toward an understanding with other denominations?

The Conference, fully aware of the need of evangelical literature, would welcome any steps taken to remedy this want. A commission of four is empowered to enter into conference with other bodies, with a view to issuing and propagating Christian literature.

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This commission is also requested to take steps in order to start a general Baptist paper.

On account of the destruction of large quantities of hymn-books and of the utter impossibility of replacing them with other than inadequate selections, the churches suffer greatly. On the other hand, we have a most effective selection prepared in manuscript form, whose publication has been prevented by the war. It is of paramount importance that exceptional outside help should be granted, to enable us to have such an indispensable tool.

8. What would be the prospects for colportage work?

We consider colportage as the best pioneer method of evangelization, and are therefore of opinion that as many men as may be available should be put into that work, as soon as funds shall be coming in. A commission of four members is empowered to make plans, in order to be able to give our American brethren the information they may eventually require on this question.

9. What is the opinion of the Conference with regard to matters of education and the training of our workers in American schools?

Regretting the scarcity of Protestant schools in our country, we are of opinion that there is an urgent need for educational institutions under Christian auspices. The Conference favors at the same time the idea of sending qualified students abroad for the completion of their education.

FINAL CONFERENCES IN FRANCE

10. What would be the prospects for women's work in France?

We unanimously favor a large increase in the employment of Bible-women, visitors, nurses, and teachers, and deem that women would be most useful in the huts and foyers needed for the relief of our northern churches.

11. What is the opinion of the Conference with regard to missionary prospects?

We feel increased responsibility with regard to the prospects for new mission fields in territories which may become French. Although we are decided to do our best to find men and women, yet are we aware that we are not in a position to meet adequately the present opportunities. We place ourselves at the disposal of our American brethren if, in any way, we can facilitate the work which they may feel called upon to undertake in these fields. We might, for instance, facilitate relations with the French authorities, through qualified men belonging to our churches.

STATISTICS OF THE FRANCO-SWISS ASSOCIATION

Location of Churches	Names of Pastors	Popula- tion of Towns	Baptized Members	
			Before War	After War
Paris: Rue de Lille	A. Blocher	2,500,000	206	215
Paris: Bonne Nou- velle	M. G. Guyot	2,500,000	65	58
Colombes (No other church)	Rev. E. Raynaud	40,000	59	78
Lyons	Rev. E. Sagnol	800,000	37	43
St. Étienne and branches	A. Pinon	200,000	21	23
Valentigny	M. L. Louys	5,000	40	29
Montbéliard	Rev. B. Jaccard	10,000	80	73
Nimes	R. Du Barry	80,000	55	70
Nice	A. Long	135,000	501	501
Geneva		135,000	40	20
Tramelon	A. Gross	8,000	210	215
Chaux-de-Fonds	A. Monnier	45,000	100	130
Court	A. Affolke	4,000	40	40
Cavannes	E. Chollet	4,000	25	25
			1,028	1,069

STATISTICS OF THE FRANCO-BELGE ASSOCIATION

Location of Churches	Names of Pastors	Popula- tion of Towns	Industrial Conditions	Baptized Members		Total of Adherents		Sunday School Pupils	
				Before War	After War	Before War	After War	Before War	After War
Anzin (A)	M. Marquer, ancien	15,000	"Reduced to nothing"	34	Dispersed	80	0	30	0
Auchel (A)	M. Evard	20,000	Coal mines in action	40		250	250	135	50
Bertry (B)	Pastor died during war	6,000	"Reduced to nothing"	17	Dispersed	50	Dispersed	25	Dispersed
Bruay (B)	M. Créfier	30,000	Coal mines in action	40	50	100	150	30	50
Chauny (A)	M. Pelcé	11,000	Destroyed	58	Dispersed	350	Dispersed	60	Dispersed
Croix (C)	M. Mafille	20,000		65	55	150	100	35	35
Denain (A)	M. Farelly	35,000	"Reduced to nothing"	125	125	350	350	70	40
Lens (B)	M. Créfier	35,000	"Reduced to nothing"	85	Dispersed	300	Dispersed	200	Dispersed
Béthune (A)	M. Créfier	12,000	Destroyed	20	Dispersed	60	Dispersed	15	Dispersed
La Fère (A)	M. Andru	7,800	Destroyed	57	Dispersed	170	Dispersed	15	Dispersed
Paris	M. Ph. Vincent	3,500,000	Town much damaged	268	218	700	700	35	35
St. Sauveur (A)	M. Guillaume	4,300	Town much damaged	40	45	200	200	28	28
Mont-sur-Marchienne (A)	M. Valet	12,000	Slightly damaged	45	55	75	150	45	45
Ougrée (A)	M. Brogniez	15,000	Slightly damaged	47	50	200	200	50	50
Peruwelz	M. Rafinesque	10,000	Slightly damaged	35	32	145	125	40	30
Rouhaix } Vourcoing }	M. Rafinesque	220,000		25	14	60	40	10	30
				701	644	3,240	2,265	823	363

(A) No other evangelical church in the city.

(B) One other evangelical church in the city.

(C) Two other evangelical churches in the city.

XII

Homeward Bound with the Doughboys

Now that the fight is over, the American doughboy in France wants just one thing; and he wants it quick—"back home toot sweet." The officers may hang around the Sorbonne if they wish, go to the great American University established at Beaune, study archeology around Nîmes, run over to the French Alps, or frequent the cafés of Paris. But the doughboys have enough of overseas life, and, in making known their desire to shake the dust of Europe from their feet, they tack on their own corruption of the expressive French phrase *tout de suite*, which they are using more frequently and more emphatically than any other bit of the language they have picked up over there. The ships cannot be run fast enough to satisfy these men, most of whom were never very far from their native States in America before they started for the trenches, the shell-fire, and the gas-tanks of a battlefield on the other side of a wide sea that was infested with submarines. Now that they have helped to break the mainspring of the Watch on the Rhine, they long for the banks of the Wabash, or the shores of Lake Michigan, or little old New

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York. In the case of the men on the Noordam on this voyage, they pined for the region around the Great Lakes, since the One Hundred and Twenty-fifth and One Hundred and Twenty-sixth Infantry, of the Thirty-second Division, came principally from Michigan and Wisconsin.

The band of our Dutch ship was playing "The Yanks are coming, the Yanks are coming," as more than one thousand eight hundred rugged fellows of the Thirty-second Division of the A. E. F. came up the gang-plank at Brest, bending a bit under full packs of blankets, knapsacks, helmets, gas-masks, canteens, et cetera. The year in France had not removed the bold and somewhat uncouth facial expression which men wear who are reared in the forests, or on the fields, or beside the streams of the Great Lakes region. The months in French villages, the days and nights in trenches, the reckless charges through Château Thierry and the Argonne Forest, the occupation of a part of Germany, and the few days in "gay Paree" had left them still the plain men whose faces told that they had been reared close to the soil. Here they were, going home! The moment was electric. One standing close to the line that passed over the side of the ship could not help wishing he might take every one of them by the hand and thank him for the wonderful thing he had helped to do—a thing that will seem more wonderful a hundred years from now. In the twenty-first century our children's children

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will sing of these crusaders, to whom God gave "eyes to see a dream," and "hearts to follow the gleam." At the same time one could not help thinking of the thousands of graves on the fields where these men had fought, marked with red, white, and blue shields on wooden crosses, which proclaim the fact that American soldiers lie buried there—could not help thinking of the men who came over with the Thirty-second, but were not going back.

Each of the sturdy fellows had been given a blue ticket bearing the number of his clean straw mattress among the one thousand eight hundred or more double-deck iron beds in the steerage. Barges came alongside with tons of beef, onions, canned soup, and dried fruits, and thousands of loaves of bread. These men who had helped to save civilization were to endure the hardships of the steerage, chairless decks, and plain food for ten days or more. Some of us who had done nothing more heroic during the struggle than invest our money at a good rate of interest were in the first cabin with the officers, faring sumptuously every day. Herein lies a parable, capable of wide application if we have eyes to see it, which we shall do well to heed—that is, if we have any regard for the signs of the times.

The great ship *Imperator*, which was tied up at Hamburg throughout the war and was recently brought to Brest by the Germans for the use of the

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United States Army, was lying close by, preparing to sail for America, with twelve thousand men aboard who helped to defeat the Kaiser. French submarines were diving in and out near the mouth of the harbor. An observation balloon was a thousand feet in the air just outside of Brest. An army aeroplane was circling over us. Two United States battle-ships, the Rhode Island and the Virginia, their decks crowded with men in khaki, steamed past us, homeward bound. The Plattsburg, a troop-ship which was known as the City of New York when it was one of the ocean greyhounds twenty-five and thirty years ago, slipped out to sea ahead of us. As we were about to weigh anchor, one of the officers among the American troops aboard the Noordam was ordered ashore very suddenly, after his trunk was in his cabin. Hard luck! Interrupted after he had settled down to a game of cards in the smoking-room, happy in the expectation of seeing America in just ten days more. But a soldier goes where he is sent and does what he is told.

These men of the Thirty-second Division went where they were sent—to the Alsace front, to Château Thierry and through the Argonne. The red insignia on their left shoulders—an arrow piercing a bar—was symbolic of their service. Did they not throw themselves as straight as an arrow through the Hindenburg Line, which the German officers in their concrete dugouts believed could not be broken? Was not Private Norton the first Amer-

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ican soldier to reach Berlin? That is the story told me by the officer in command of the troops aboard the Noordam when he introduced Private Norton, who, it is alleged, hid himself in a freight-car one day, several weeks after the armistice was signed, and stayed out of sight until the train was shifted on to a side-track in Berlin and he could display the American khaki, with a red arrow on the sleeve, up and down Unter den Linden. He carried enough red paint in his pocket to leave the symbol of his division on a bridge in Berlin before he surrendered to the local police. Private Norton is from Los Angeles. California on top once more!

But Private Norton was not the only soldier on board who had distinguished himself. A modest man was Lieutenant Britton, who brought in single-handed so many German prisoners at one time that I am afraid to name the number—eighty, they said. It was a most extraordinary ruse he worked on the enemy, in persuading eighty Germans that they were surrounded and might as well surrender, when he was himself ahead of his own line. A correspondent in France wrote to a newspaper in the lieutenant's home town in Michigan that the American Army was conducting a perfectly good war in France until Britton came along and spoiled it all. One can hear a lot of good stories on a troop-ship. One day the major in command sat down and told me a few of the achievements of his men. One company of the Thirty-second Division went into the Argonne

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fight and fought its way for twenty days through the dense forests and across the deep ravines. Of the two hundred and thirty-eight in that company who went in, one hundred and seven men were able to answer roll-call when they came out. A machine-gun company of the same division went into France one hundred and seventy-two strong, but on board the Noordam only twenty-nine of the original company were returning home. Thirty-nine had been killed in action, ninety-nine had been wounded (many severely), and one had died from disease. None were known to have been discharged. But these figures are not really striking in comparison with the records of many other companies.

One day as I came up from the lower forward deck, after mixing for an hour with the doughboys, General Andrews was leaning on the rail. "General," I queried, "how do you account for the ability of these raw countrymen to meet successfully the shock troops of Germany?" He was not long in replying that, in the first place, there was no finer body of men in any army. Nearly all of them were about the same age, which was noticeable in comparison with the armies of war-worn Europe. In the second place, he said, they came over with the morale of crusaders, feeling they must throw the decisive pound into the scales. Naturally our conversation led up to the welfare work done for the soldiers by the various organizations. The general said it had all been done in his branch of

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the service, and therefore he knew, but he had no patience with the criticism on matters relatively trivial. He was sure, too, that General Pershing shared that view.

"Relatively trivial." Well said! There was a Salvation Army lassie on board who I am sure had done her bit, and had done it well. There were Red Cross workers and "Y" girls returning home after service with the army. I recalled some of the women whom I had seen in action. At Châlons-sur-Marne, when I asked the way to the "Y," a doughboy said: "There are no Y men here just now, but there are two honest-to-goodness American girls here in charge of the hut, and they sure are fine. They will do anything for us fellows, and a doughboy looks as good to them as an officer." That evening I found other enlisted men at the hut singing the same kind of songs about the two American girls who had worn themselves out that day in moving their equipment into larger quarters. Then there was the big hut at Verdun, with four American girls in charge, who had served breakfast to four hundred men that morning. It made a great impression on members of the Industrial Commission from America, with whom I was traveling that day. Of course there were some mistakes made. Incidentally, I saw a mistake made by representatives of the United States Army, when tons of coal were dropped into the harbor at Brest, and our sailing was delayed. Yes, some mistakes

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were made, but much of the criticism has been "on matters relatively trivial," as General Andrews said. Cigarets and chocolate are tremendously important when they are needed at the front. So is the work of the "Y" woman I saw on the streets of London late at night, tactfully separating doughboys from street-walkers, and steering them to places of safety.

The enlisted men who were crowded into the hold at night, and on the lower decks by day, found the voyage long-drawn-out, despite their jazz band, their dances and songs, and the excitement of a wireless call one day to go to the relief of a sailing-vessel in distress, which must have been reached by some other ship before we arrived on the spot. I rather innocently remarked to the chaplain in charge of both the social and religious work for the troops that years ago I was accused of some native ability to tell negro dialect stories. The next night Uncle Remus and other less-known characters were introduced below decks. Later, in mid-Atlantic, on the forward deck the men gathered around for more of the same sort. There were prominent men and women in the passenger-list with whom it was worth while to establish acquaintance, and my report on conditions as I observed them in France and Belgium was being prepared, but some of us could not resist the lure of the men on the lower decks. One evening at seven o'clock the chaplain asked me to conduct a religious service in open air.

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Several hundred men crowded around where the wind was favorable. And how they did sing! "When the Roll is Called up Yonder, I'll be There"; "The Little Brown Church in the Wild-wood"; "Pass Me Not, O Gentle Saviour"; "Stand Up, Stand Up for Jesus." Until then they had not taken the man with the negro dialect stories for a sky-pilot. But apparently they were ready to listen to an appeal to take their orders through life from the Great Commander, just as during the war they had obeyed orders from army headquarters and thereby had achieved success. At the close of the address almost every hand seemed to go up in an expression of the desire to have the help of the Great Commander in an attempt to dedicate their lives, in the spirit of Christ, to the highest and best, and to return home to make America worthy of the sacrifices of their comrades who were sleeping in France. What a great opportunity for real service was enjoyed by manly men who were close to our soldiers during those fateful days of 1917 and 1918.

The last day out it was hard to keep away from the forward deck, where as many doughboys as could stand in comfort crowded to the bow, sat on the ventilators, and climbed into the rigging, as if anxious to catch sight of land at the earliest second. When the hills were in plain view one of them remarked that it looked like an interesting country. When the pilot came up the side at Ambrose Channel lightship they greeted him with a cheer. And

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when Old Glory was released at the top of the foremost mast of the Dutch ship they simply howled. They mistook a lighthouse for the Goddess of Liberty and saluted accordingly. The Goddess of Liberty, by the way, is now coming into its own. Part of the deck talk all the way across the Atlantic is about seeing Miss Liberty. There is an appropriateness in this gift from France now being the one thing the boys look for as they return home. As the ship passed under the uplifted arms of the statue with torch in hand, one of them said, "Take a good look, old girl, you'll never see me again." Another said, "No more war for me, unless it's domestic."

When a customs officer, with a bundle of papers under his arm, came aboard, wearing a greenish coat which suggested a Boche uniform, he was "guyed" unmercifully. "He looks like a Hun." "Maybe he's a spy." "He seems to have important papers." "Private, put on your side-arms and guard him." "Take him to the rear."

We reached New York harbor too late to be permitted to dock the same day, so we dropped anchor in the bay Saturday night. A full, white moon was coming up out of the sea, and the lights from the shore were falling in silvery ribbons across the water. The stage was well set, when after supper the men realized they were back home and began to sing. It was interesting to note the songs they preferred—such songs as "Memories," "Dream-

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land," "Smiles," "Love's Old Sweet Song," "Carry Me Back to Old Virginny," and "When You Come to the End of a Perfect Day."

It was a good time, too, for them to sing,

Pack up your troubles in your old kit-bag,
And smile, smile, smile.
While you've a lucifer to light your fag,
Smile, boys; that's the style.
What's the use of worrying?
It never was worth while;
So pack up your troubles in your old kit-bag,
And smile, smile, smile.

The hour and the atmosphere were appropriate for the song they sang with feeling:

There's a long, long trail awinding
Into the land of my dreams,
Where the nightingales are singing,
And a white moon beams;
There's a long, long night of waiting
Until my dreams all come true,
Till the day when I'll be going down
That long, long trail with you.

A little later a small group drifted off, and I heard them singing, "I Want a Girl just like the Girl that Married Dear Old Dad." And as if in memory of those who were left on the fields of France, this same small group on the side were singing:

Break the news to mother,
That I am not coming home.

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The ship's band was beginning to play for a dance for the officers and first-cabin passengers on the upper deck. It struck up the air we had heard at Brest as the men were coming aboard. The soldiers sang it:

Over there, over there;
Send the word, send the word over there,
That the Yanks are coming, the Yanks are coming,
The drums rum-tum-ming ev'rywhere.
So prepare—say a pra'r;
Send the word, send the word to beware!

When the echoes of the last lines had died away,

We'll be over, we're coming over,
And we won't come back till it's over over there,

one of the men piped up,

“WELL, WE ARE BACK; AND IT'S OVER.”

XIII

Portions of the Formal Report to the Board of Managers

On the homeward voyage Secretary Franklin formulated his report to the Board of Managers of the American Baptist Foreign Mission Society. The following sections are taken from the heart of his report:

SOME QUESTIONS FOR CONSIDERATION

1. *Are France and Belgium in need of assistance?*

(1) First is the appeal of the devastated regions. From the North Sea to the borders of Switzerland there is a great gash, four hundred and fifty miles in length and varying in breadth, which includes two thousand cities, towns, and villages completely destroyed, and lying in appalling silence, or seriously injured.

(2) Next is the bitter cry of those who suffer. There are hundreds of thousands of women and children whose husbands or fathers fell in battle, whose houses have been destroyed, who are beginning to think of returning to the piles of brick and dust that they call home, and who are likely to suffer severely next winter.

(3) In a very large section of France and southern Belgium there was a needless destruction of practically all industries. Mines have been injured to such an extent that they are useless at present, and in some cases they

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cannot be restored to normal output for at least six years. Thousands of factories, with all their machinery, were completely demolished when the Germans retreated. Until money can be secured to replace the machinery, there seems to be little prospect for industrial recuperation. The deplorable industrial conditions are affecting the finances of the country. The French franc is worth about twenty per cent less, in comparison with American and English currency, than was true before the war. Meanwhile, on account of the vast destruction in its chief industrial area, the Government is facing the loss, for possibly twenty-five years, of taxes on about one-fourth of the taxable property of the country. We are told that the Government is afraid to tax the people directly for even the interest on its huge indebtedness. With a large part of the industries destroyed, and the cost of living about three and one-third times as high as it was before the war, the situation for the French people is alarming.

(4) Religious conditions constitute an appeal. Of the thirty-eight millions of people in France, nearly all are nominally Roman Catholics, except the comparatively small Protestant bodies, who aggregate fewer than one million. But it is said that not more than six or seven millions of the Roman Catholics in France take a personal interest in religion, and that at least thirty millions may be said to constitute a field for religious effort. In one of my letters from France I attempted to give some idea of the strength of the Protestant forces and of the general effect of the war on the religious situation. Without question the Vatican has lost much of its prestige, and evangelical principles are more widely respected than before the war. But it can hardly be said that there is widespread interest in personal religion as a result of the conflict. Most churches in France have suffered through the years of struggle. Many churches in the northern areas have lost their houses of worship, or have seen them

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severely injured. The congregations have been scattered; many of the members have been killed; in numerous instances the work must be begun anew. In the Franco-Belge Baptist Association fourteen of the sixteen churches were in towns completely destroyed by the Germans, or occupied by them for four years.

2. Is America under any special obligation to lend assistance at this hour?

(1) Every humanitarian instinct demands that we have fellowship with the sufferings of the French and Belgian peoples. In a very real sense, American Christianity is now on trial.

(2) The volume and intensity of the suffering of sister nations in recent days, for principles fundamental in American life, constitute a strong appeal.

(3) The significant political and spiritual contributions of France to America make us debtors.

France has been a battle-ground of new ideas that afterward triumphed in other parts of the earth. Benjamin Franklin was so impressed with this fact that he declared every man to have two mother countries—his own and France. France has been the seed-plot where trees were started, which grew more rapidly when transplanted in a less rocky soil where the climate proved more favorable. Thomas Jefferson seems to have received some of his inspiration from the land of the Huguenots before he made his fight for separation of Church and State.

The world can never repay the heroic Belgian nation for its determined stand at Liège, and later when the German armies were held sufficiently to give the larger powers still more time to prepare to meet the enemy.

(4) Evangelical Christians of America are peculiarly indebted to France. It would be interesting to trace historically some of the strongest evangelical streams in America to the Huguenot sources.

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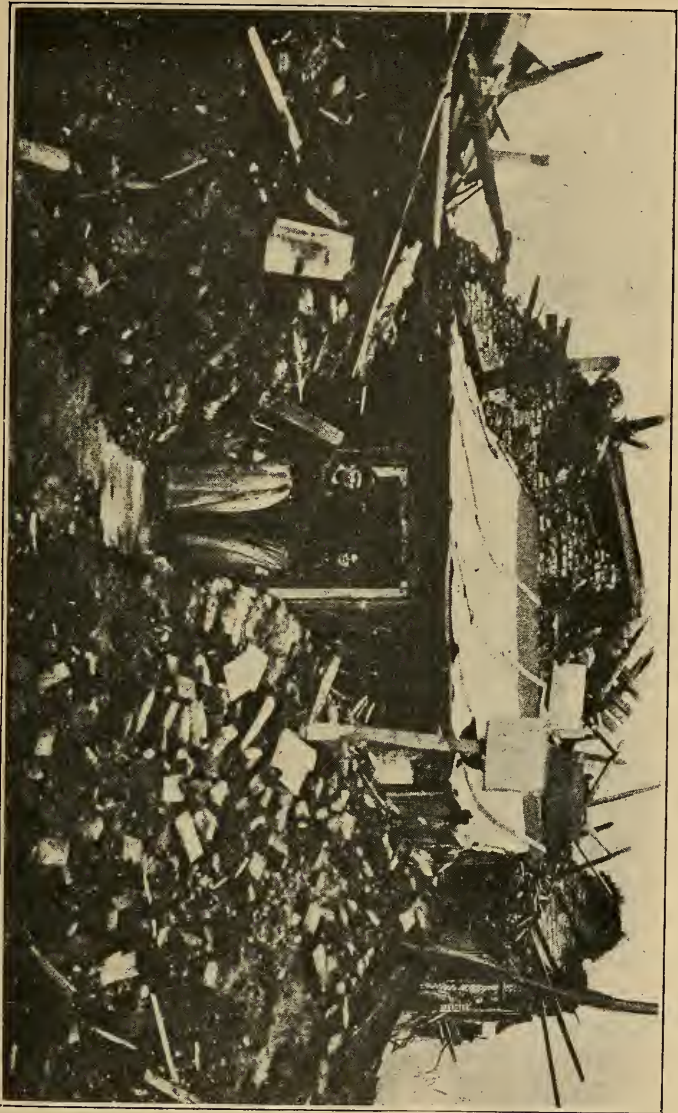
3. *What are some of the immediate needs that may be met in part by the churches of America?*

(1) The first needs are of a very practical character.

The hour calls for such service as that suggested by the Master when he declared, "Inasmuch as ye did it unto one of these my brethren, even these least, ye did it unto me." It is a moment for service of the most disinterested character, regardless of the race or creed of the beneficiary. It is not a moment for propaganda as such. A consoling gospel should be preached to a suffering people, and with it should go an expression of practical Christianity.

Church buildings must be erected in the not distant future, but they do not constitute the first need. The people are beginning to go back in small numbers to their towns and villages, and many of them will find nothing left of their old homes. They will be compelled to suffer great hardships and privation during the reconstruction period, and any practical assistance that can be offered them will be greatly appreciated. In my judgment, the Christian forces of America should open huts, or foyers, as the French call them, which can be made to minister to the physical comfort of the people returning to their homes, and which may be used as places of worship as well until it is possible to erect permanent church buildings. As an illustration, consider the city of Lens, where there was a Baptist church before the war.

In 1914 Lens was a city of thirty thousand people in the richest coal-mining region of northern France. When the Germans retreated northward in 1918, not a structure of any sort was left. What was once a prosperous city is now a waste of broken stone and brick, with here and there a jagged wall or chimney left standing. When I was there in April about one hundred people had returned, and were trying to make temporary shelters for them-



The first residence reestablished at Lens, a city of 30,000 or 40,000 people before the war. Not one house of any kind was left standing in the entire city. The people are now beginning to return.

Here is a center for foyer work

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selves. Without question, this city will be rebuilt, and doubtless in a few months' time a large number of people will be moving in that direction. With the coming of autumn and winter the suffering among the returned refugees will be great, unless some provision is made for their comfort. If a central hall, a large board structure, were erected in Lens, with social rooms, well heated and lighted through the winter, that in itself would furnish a large measure of comfort. Such a hall could be used, too, as a depot for supplies of clothing and food, and sleeping accommodations could be provided for a few of the people who would need shelter while reestablishing their homes. In the outlying villages several small inexpensive cottages might be erected, each in charge of a Christian family, where a few people could be given shelter temporarily. Such a plan as is suggested is capable of almost indefinite expansion. There are several towns in the devastated areas where there were Baptist churches before the war, and therefore these are in a peculiar way the fields to which we should give attention immediately by enabling the pastors and their people to conduct huts, or foyers, properly equipped. Were work of this character undertaken, one man and perhaps two women should be in charge of each large center. These workers would find much to do too, outside of the huts in ministering to the community. I am of the opinion that some man from America, with good business sense and a knowledge of the French language, should be sent to France to have supervision of all this work, in conference with French committees, should the two Boards undertake it. Every one with whom I talked in France, or aboard ship, is of the opinion that what I am suggesting is altogether practicable and is urgently required.

In America there is considerable interest in the war orphans of France, and I made special effort to ascertain the wisest procedure on the part of those who wish to

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lend assistance. Among the French I found the general opinion that orphanages should be established only as a last resort. Every one I consulted was of the opinion that it is far better for the children to be left with the mothers, and for friends in America to supplement what the French Government will do, rather than to provide orphanages. Where there are no mothers, or other relatives left to care for the children, orphanages already in existence may be utilized. The Committees of our Baptist Associations in France are prepared to administer any funds that may be sent through our Foreign Mission Society for the support of orphans. Each orphan will require about one hundred dollars per annum or more in addition to the sixty dollars provided by the French Government, although smaller amounts will be welcomed.

Provision should be made immediately to assist the pastors in France. Most of the pastors who were not called to the colors have given their time exclusively to their work, and while their salaries have naturally been reduced the cost of living has greatly increased. Men in other vocations now receive much larger wages or salaries than were provided before the war. The pastors as a class have felt the financial pinch more acutely perhaps than any other group in France. These men should be enabled to give their full time and strength to preaching a consoling gospel to the people whose hearts crave spiritual strength, as they try to reconstruct their lives, their homes, and their industries. Evangelistic campaigns should be conducted.

(2) Needs that must be anticipated.

In very many sections a new start is necessary, and the Baptists must begin about where they were, as churches, twenty-five years ago. Without question, they must be assisted in the erection of their houses of worship. It is to be hoped too that the Baptists of America, who constitute one of the largest of all the evangelical denomina-

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tions, will not confine their gifts for French work to the Baptists in France, who are very weak in comparison with others. The findings of the joint conference in Paris express the feeling which I found among the French and Belgian Baptists in general, to the effect that in this hour of great need they have no right to monopolize the interest of their brethren in America.

I was surprised to find that in France and Belgium there is a very limited evangelical Christian literature. It is my opinion that within the next two or three years assistance should be given to the production and distribution of such literature in those countries. Here is an opportunity for cooperative effort, and if the evangelicals were encouraged to expect assistance in such effort a joint committee might be constituted, with authority to bring out more books by French authors, to secure translations of acceptable works in other languages, and to arrange for the distribution of such literature in every section of the two countries.

It seems to be apparent to thoughtful men in France that a good college under evangelical Christian auspices is essential. I find no difference of opinion on that point, and most of the French people with whom I talked believe that nothing would contribute so much in the end to the advancement of their cause as the establishment of such an institution, with a few preparatory schools. In the Huguenot country I was impressed with the sturdiness of the children of the large Protestant population, and I was made to feel that if modern education could be added to their sturdiness of character and to the zeal which they have inherited, France might feel again the power of the Huguenots. Indeed, I am of the opinion that the hope of evangelical Christianity in France lies largely in the six hundred thousand people who are the spiritual descendants of the Huguenots. At present many of these people are suffering from formalism, but the traditions

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which are dear to them furnish a background that prompts them to respond readily to a warm evangelical interpretation of the gospel. Several years ago Dr. Ruben Sailens reached the conclusion that these Christians of Huguenot stock could do more than any other people for the spiritual renewal of France, if they were to catch a fresh passion for the propagation of evangelical principles. Accordingly, he has been working almost entirely in recent years in the Reformed churches, where great crowds have heard him gladly. If a thoroughly good college, with several academies, could be established in the old Huguenot country of France, I believe that in a few decades a large number of men would be released to lead in the struggle for the spiritual renewal of their country. This, however, is too large an enterprise for any one Board. It should receive the sympathetic consideration of evangelical bodies in America who acknowledge their indebtedness to John Calvin and the Huguenots and who covet an opportunity to make a gift in recognition of that indebtedness. Such an institution should be contributed as an outright gift to the evangelical Christians of France. This suggestion of the gift of an institution of learning to the general body of evangelical Christians in France raises the question of our ultimate interest in movements in that country.

4. *What is our ultimate or chief interest with reference to the spiritual life of France?*

(1) We believe that those Christian principles which are best described as evangelical are necessary for the world at large.

(2) We believe that it is of importance to the world at large that evangelical principles shall prevail in France.

France has a new place in the affections of men. Never before was a land made sacred by the blood of the sons of so many nations. The ends of the earth have con-

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tributed of their greatest treasure to insure the triumph of right in the struggle on the soil of France. Where treasure has been invested by nations, thither will the hearts of men turn with new affection. The scenes of suffering frequently become humanity's shrines. In the midst of the conflict Edison said, "France is the banner of the world."

France occupies a larger place in the thought of the world. Its history will be studied more widely, and humanity will have a fresh appreciation of that country's immeasurable contribution to civilization. Potentially, France is today a greater moral power than ever before, and almost certainly will be a greater political power, with immense colonial possessions.

In view of her past history, in view of her recent heroism, and in view of her probable future, we covet the influence of France on all the world in favor of the freedom of the human soul, and against priestcraft and autocracy. Our chief concern in the religious life of France is that evangelical principles shall prevail.

5. How can we best cooperate with our brethren in France and Belgium? How can we best express our chief interest in the spiritual life of these countries?

(1) A complete program for the future not determinable at present.

Some of the immediate needs have been pointed out. Besides those immediate needs, several tasks of large proportions appear to await our brethren in the not distant future. Besides helping to meet the immediate needs, we should prepare to assist, in time, in the reconstruction of houses of worship, in the support of wide-spread evangelistic effort, in the creation of adequate facilities for the development of evangelical leadership, in the production and distribution of Christian literature, and in other ways. But I confess that a complete program for the future does

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not seem determinable at present. With the exception of a few clearly defined needs which are appearing on the horizon, I could not attempt as yet to outline, if I were asked to do so, a well-defined program for the years to come, and I would question the ability of any one outside of France, to see very far into the future. There is still a low barometer. There may be breakers ahead. The wreckage must be removed. Wounds must be bound up. The fields must be salvaged before a large program of constructive work can be undertaken. The main question to be answered is this: Do we wish to help in reconstruction? If we wish to help, we may allow some of the details of the program to await developments.

(2) Principles of procedure more important than program.

It is my opinion that as we face the future the principles of procedure on the part of American evangelicals who wish to lend a hand in France are more important than a detailed program of effort for the days that lie ahead. In the light of our deepest interest in the spiritual life of France, namely, the prevalence of evangelical Christianity, the following principles seem fairly clear:

a. We should cultivate a closer fellowship with our evangelical brethren of France and Belgium. The evangelical truths held in common constitute the basis for an *entente cordiale*.

b. We should recognize that evangelical Christianity is not an exotic in France. What we wish the people of that land to enjoy is no new thing to them. Evangelical principles are indigenous in the land of Joan of Arc, John Calvin, Coligny, and the martyred Protestants who bore the name Huguenots. The French Reformation preceded the similar movements in Germany and England. "There is nothing more French, more 'old French,' than the Protestantism of France."

In this land, where the open Bible on the table in front

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of the pulpit of almost every evangelical church is the badge of Protestantism, there were many translations of the Scriptures before Christopher Columbus discovered America.

c. We should recognize with gratitude that the fountains of evangelical Christianity were flowing in France long before there was church life of any kind in America. Through the centuries the rivulet of evangelical religion has been flowing in Europe, although often retarded. We should seek to assist in quickening the flow of the native springs rather than attempt artificial irrigation through American channels.

d. There should be no move on our part that would suggest a religious invasion of France by a foreign force. We should seek the counsel of the true spiritual descendants of Calvin and the Huguenots, whose interest in the progress of evangelical religion in their own land, the land of their fathers, surely is as genuine and as deep as ours can be, and whose knowledge of the situation is superior to our own. They are entitled to a full knowledge of all the plans of those who wish to aid them. They will welcome us if we go as comrades. They will not welcome an American program imposed on France.

e. We should proceed with humility. What have we that we did not receive? Did we create the national resources that constitute much of our power today? Did we not inherit the principles that we wish to propagate? And historically we owe much to the early French Protestants who were scattered to Holland and to England, and to America, when they were about to suffer imprisonment, or even death, for their principles. Here in the free air of America the principles for which the early Protestants in France were persecuted have blazed forth. The sparks that fell into the fields of America found a place where they could burst into a great flame, for the enlightenment of the world.

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Our efforts for France and Belgium should be made without shouting by the captains. There should be an almost studied absence of display. Our cooperation should be unobtrusive. The less we discuss our own leadership at this hour, the better. The more we assume the attitude of brother, the more widely can we serve; and service—disinterested service—should be our watchword.

f. We should exercise the greatest care to strengthen the evangelical front in France and Belgium and not to weaken it, either through an excessive broadness or through a needless narrowness.

“Église Évangélique” (Evangelical Church) is the name over nearly every one of the Protestant churches in France and Belgium. The line of cleavage there is between Romanism and evangelicalism. Let not the issue be obscured, either through an excessive broadness or through a needless narrowness. Any attempt at an alliance with Rome is excessive broadness, and a recent effort in that direction was, in my judgment, enough to make the spirits of Calvin and the Huguenots rebuke the Commission, as it crossed the soil of the evangelical martyrs of France. On the other hand, let no needless narrowness prevent a proper cooperation between those who are spiritual allies. We believe that organic union of churches would tend to diminish emphasis on the right of every man to think and to act for himself, apart from creed, ordinance, priest, or church; hence we oppose it. But we are ready, I take it, to cooperate with those who, like Joan of Arc, believe that God speaks directly to the human soul, regardless of ecclesiastical connections; and who, also like the heroine of France breathing the name of Jesus only as the flames were about her, accept him and him alone as their Lord and Saviour. Let us do nothing at this great hour to obscure the issue in France and Belgium, and in the rest of the world.

g. Our cooperation in this hour should not degenerate

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into merely, or even chiefly, a financial contribution. We should give in large sums, and give quickly to relieve physical suffering and to help rebuild homes, churches, and industries, and to preach the consoling gospel, but we have a spiritual offering of prayer and rich brotherhood for our allies in a land from which we have received so much.

Nothing in the principles of procedure as suggested above lessens the importance of the development of a strong Baptist regiment in France and Belgium. Indeed the Baptist forces in these countries must be strengthened if they are to make their proper contribution in cooperation with other evangelicals. The American army cooperated with other armies in France, and it could never have won the notable victories at Château-Thierry, at St. Mihiel, and in the Argonne Forest if it had not proceeded with a full knowledge of what its allies were doing on the right and on the left. But it did not lose its own identity, nor did it abandon its own methods. It remained an American army with American morale and inspired by American traditions, while working in harmony with others who were contending for the same righteous principles. Baptists have a sector to hold in the great campaign in France, and there is no call for the regiment to lose its identity. But in my judgment, Baptists in France and Belgium will make their best contribution as they cooperate with others who hold to and contend for the great fundamentals. The cause that unites us with the true spiritual descendants of John Calvin and the Huguenots is greater than the differences that separate us. And while remaining loyal to our convictions we can cooperate with those who stand for freedom of conscience, the Lordship of Jesus, and the open Bible. In this connection I recall the words of one of the well-known Baptists in England, whom I heard two weeks ago, "I believe in denominationalism because I believe in the church-universal."

XIV

Suggestions for Early Consideration

I. Contributions should be made immediately to assist the evangelical churches in France in the conduct of their work, including the support of pastors whose income has been greatly reduced.

II. Contributions should be forwarded through the Societies to the proper committees in France for the relief of war orphans. With the prevailing high prices, the mothers should be given perhaps \$10 per month in addition to what the Government will do for each child that is wholly dependent. Small amounts will suffice in many cases. The committees will award help in such measure as may be required in each individual case.

III. Foyers should be erected in the destroyed cities which are now being rebuilt, to offer shelter, light, and heat, and food and clothing where required, to returning refugees without regard to creed or class. Foyers should be established where it is expected that evangelical churches will be re-organized, and the social service now should help to open doors for large evangelistic effort in the future.

IV. Provision should be made for temporary

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chapels in the devastated areas. Where huts or foyers are established such buildings could be used temporarily as places of worship. The people need the consolation of the gospel.

V. Preparation should be made to assist the churches in the future, as may be required, in the reconstruction of permanent houses of worship, the creation of a wider Christian literature, the support of evangelistic campaigns, and the establishment of one or more colleges under Christian auspices.

STEPS ALREADY TAKEN

The American Baptist Foreign Mission Society has already begun to help meet all the more immediately urgent needs as outlined above and is hoping to assist in meeting those that must receive future consideration. Appropriations are being made to aid the churches, gifts for the support of orphans are being solicited, and a well-qualified French Baptist, a citizen of the United States, Rev. Oliva Brouillette, has been released by the French Baptist Church at Salem, Mass., and has sailed for France to represent the Society in the establishment of foyer work. Mr. Brouillette, who will be known as Director of Foyer Work, spent six months during the war in Y. M. C. A. work with the French soldiers. He is believed to be admirably fitted for the responsible task which he will undertake for us in the devastated regions of northern

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France, in cooperation with the French Baptists, where he is to give general direction to relief work in several centers for people of all classes who need a helping hand. The Woman's American Baptist Foreign Mission Society has under advisement plans for lending assistance. Already arrangements are being made by that Society to send supplies of clothing for distribution in the devastated regions in connection with the foyer work.

THE WORK OF THE UNION PROTESTANT COMMITTEE

Already our Society has been asked to contribute one-tenth of the \$3,000,000 which it is proposed to raise in America for distribution by the Union Protestant Committee for War Relief in France and Belgium, whose headquarters are in Paris. It is proposed to distribute the \$3,000,000 as follows:

For church maintenance (current ex-	
penses)	\$1,200,000.00
For relief	750,000.00
For rebuilding of churches.....	500,000.00
For educational and association work	300,000.00
For home missions.....	250,000.00
	<hr/>
Total	\$3,000,000.00

Under present conditions in France it is impossible to make estimates that can be guaranteed, but

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in my judgment the amount requested from America is not too large. The figure named would probably not be excessive as an amount which should be given by America in addition to what the French churches can raise and to what they will receive from England, if nothing more were to be considered than relief work and the reparation of damages. Facing the enlarged obligations of the future, there is additional reason for believing that the estimate is none too large. I have arrived at this conclusion principally through my study of the probable needs of the Baptist churches and their future obligations, and an attempt to compare Baptist needs and responsibilities with others of the entire evangelical group, of which our own denomination is but a small fraction.

It is my opinion that much freedom should be allowed the Union Protestant Committee for War Relief in France and Belgium in the distribution of the \$3,000,000. Without having received any suggestion from the Committee itself, I have reached the conclusion that future developments may make it advisable for the Committee to have power to make adjustments between the several items within the total budget for \$3,000,000, reducing at one point in order to enlarge expenditures at another, should emergencies arise.

I believe our Board should designate for the use of Baptist churches in France and Belgium a portion of the \$300,000 we are requested to contribute.

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Much of our contribution through the Union Protestant Committee could be so designated as to assist the Baptists of France and Belgium in the program of reconstruction which they hope to carry out. At the same time I trust that a very large part of our contribution will be sent to the Committee undesignated.

ADDITIONAL FACTS

“The Protestant population of France is now estimated at 600,000 among 38,000,000 nominal Roman Catholics, of whom only a small portion are ‘practising.’ There are 1,200 Protestant churches of all communions, besides missions and other small groups, with more than 1,200 pastors. The accession of Alsace and Lorraine would add about 275,000 to the Protestant population.”—*French and Belgian Protestantism*,” page 62.

In general, the evangelical pastors in France and Belgium before the war were in number about as follows:

The Union of Evangelical Reformed	
Churches of France.....	413
National Union of Reformed Churches	201
Lutheran Evangelical Churches.....	80
Union of Methodist Churches.....	30
Methodist Episcopal Churches of	
France	5
Baptist Churches	30

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Central Evangelical Society.....	76
Popular Evangelical Mission of France (McAll)	30
Belgian Missionary Church.....	50
Union of Evangelical Protestant Churches of Belgium.....	38

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The Paris Evangelical Missionary Society reported two hundred men and women under appointment. Nearly one hundred pastors and theological students gave their lives in the war. One hundred and thirty-five pastors, six evangelists, and fifty-eight theological students received the *Croix de Guerre*, with a total of two hundred and ninety-six citations for heroic service as soldiers at the front. Most of these men were in the trenches or were engaged in some other form of actual war service. A few were chaplains. One hundred and fifty-six sons of evangelical pastors in France gave their lives in the war.

There were one hundred and fourteen evangelical churches and a number of mission halls in the invaded areas of France and Belgium, besides many homes of pastors.

XV

Loyalty to Evangelical Pioneers in France

My heart has been deeply moved as I have stood where the evangelical torch-bearers of other centuries suffered; and especially when I have recalled that historically we received much light from France. Our torches have been burning in a freer atmosphere, and by reason of a wealth of natural resources, as well as of greater liberty, the supply of oil for our own torches has been more nearly adequate. Shall we not help now to supply oil to the torches that at times have seemed to be flickering in the close atmosphere of Europe, which has been so unfavorable to the existence of evangelical light?

Again and again in France I have felt that it would be appropriate to attribute not only to those who died in the early years of the great war, but to the evangelical pioneers of France as well, the sentiment of the stirring lines, replete with pathos and with challenge:

We are the Dead. Short days ago
We lived, felt dawn, saw sunset glow,
Loved and were loved; and now we lie
In Flanders fields.

LOYALTY TO PIONEERS

Take up our quarrel with the foe!
To you, from failing hands, we throw
The torch. Be yours to lift it high!
If ye break faith with us who die,
We shall not sleep, though poppies grow
In Flanders fields.

Again and again in France I have felt that evangelicals of America might adopt the American soldiers' response to the call from Flanders Fields and make it their own reply to the spiritual pioneers in France:

Rest ye in peace, ye Flanders dead,
The fight that ye so bravely led
We've taken up. And we will keep
True faith with you who lie asleep,
With each a cross to mark his bed,
And poppies blowing overhead,
Where once his own life-blood ran red,
So let your rest be sweet and deep
In Flanders fields.

Fear not that ye have died for naught
The torch ye threw to us we caught.
Ten million hands will hold it high,
And Freedom's light shall never die!
We've learned the lesson that ye taught
In Flanders fields.

A hundred times while I was in France I recalled that America's heart was thrilled when it was announced that General Pershing, at the tomb of the great French soldier, had said, "Lafayette, we are here." If Pershing was warranted in addressing

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the spirit of Lafayette, we have equal reason for going in our strength to France, and in gratitude for such evangelicals as Joan of Arc, John Calvin, and the Huguenots, saying,

“ WE ARE HERE ! ”







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